



**U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Public Meeting:  
Requirements for Additional Traceability Records for Certain Foods: Proposed Rule  
November 6, 2020**

**Speakers' and Panelists' Biographies**

**Kari Barrett, Advisor for Strategic Communications and Public Engagement, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), FDA**

Kari Barrett provides leadership and consultation on communications tied to the FDA's foods-related initiatives. She plans, develops, conducts and directs Agency-level stakeholder outreach on food safety, nutrition, and other food-related issues to advance the FDA's public health and consumer protection goals. Ms. Barrett is a former FDA Deputy Chief of Staff and a former Deputy in the Agency's Office of Legislation. She has served as a Senior Advisor at Leavitt Partners in the consulting group's Food Safety and Import Practice and spent 15 years in trade association management and leadership positions.

**Karen Blickenstaff, Response Staff Director, Coordinated Outbreak Response and Evaluation Network (CORE), CFSAN, FDA**

Karen Blickenstaff is the Response Staff Director for the Coordinated Outbreak Response and Evaluation Network (CORE). In this role, she oversees three multidisciplinary response teams as they coordinate the agency's response to foodborne outbreaks. The teams are responsible for coordinating information flow across organizations during an outbreak response, evaluating incoming data to help inform response strategies, and conducting traceback investigations. Ms. Blickenstaff has been with the agency for 13 years. Prior to her role with CORE, she held positions in FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine, Office of Research and FDA's Office of Regulatory Affairs, Office of Regulatory Science. Karen received both her B.S. and M.S. from University of Maryland, College Park.

**Rebecca Buckner, Senior Science Advisor to the CFSAN Center Director, CFSAN, FDA**

Dr. Rebecca Buckner works for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, where she is a Senior Science Policy Advisor to the Center Director. Dr. Buckner currently focuses on international policy issues such as FDA's Food Safety Systems Recognition Arrangements. In recent years, she managed the development of the seven foundational rules mandated by the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and the implementation of those rulemakings and other FSMA mandates for the FDA Foods Program.

**Yuhuan Chen, Interdisciplinary Scientist, Division of Risk and Decision Analysis (DRDA), CFSAN, FDA**

Dr. Yuhuan Chen is an Interdisciplinary Scientist in the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition at the FDA. With expertise in food microbiology, preventive controls, and risk modeling, Dr. Chen provides leadership and coordination for multidisciplinary risk assessments to inform policy decisions. Prior to joining FDA, she was Director of Science Policy at a trade association, where she worked for what was then the National Food Processors Association and held several positions over ten years. She graduated from Peking University with a B.S. in Biology, earned her M.S. in Nutrition from Eastern Illinois University, and Ph.D. in Food Microbiology from Rutgers University. Dr. Chen currently serves on the editorial board for the journal *Applied and Environmental Microbiology*. She is a past chair of the IAFP Microbial Modeling and Risk Analysis professional development group, and a past chair of the Technical Committee of the Interagency Risk Assessment Consortium.



**Angela Fields, Senior Consumer Safety Officer, Coordinated Outbreak Response and Evaluation Network (CORE), CFSAN, FDA**

Angela Fields is the Senior Consumer Safety Officer for the Coordinated Outbreak Response and Evaluation Network (CORE). As a member of CORE Response, she provides epidemiologic and traceback expertise and evaluation of data related to outbreaks in support of FDA's response activities. Additionally, she serves as one of CORE's traceability subject matter experts participating in Agency initiatives and providing internal and external trainings on traceability and outbreak response.

**Laura Gieraltowski CDR, US Public Health Service, Lead, Foodborne Outbreak Response Team, Outbreak Response and Prevention Branch, Division of Foodborne, Waterborne and Environmental Diseases, CDC**

Dr. Laura Gieraltowski is the Lead of the Foodborne Outbreak Response Team in the Outbreak Response and Prevention Branch at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, Georgia. She leads the team that helps coordinate the national network of epidemiologists and other public health officials who investigate outbreaks of foodborne and other enteric illnesses. Dr. Gieraltowski is a graduate of CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service Program. She received a PhD in Epidemiology from the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health and has a Masters of Public Health degree in behavioral health sciences from Emory University Rollins School of Public Health. She has worked at the CDC since 2009 and has been involved in numerous multistate outbreak investigations leading to the identification and recall of food products.

**Bryan Hitchcock, Sr. Director Food Chain & Executive Director, Global Food Traceability Center, Institute of Food Technologists (IFT)**

Bryan Hitchcock is currently the Sr. Director Food Chain & Exec. Director of the Global Food Traceability Center (GFTC) at the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT). In this role, he is responsible for managing and directing the GFTC including overall leadership, strategy & governance, sales & marketing, and government/public/industry relations. In addition, he will serve as IFT's principal scientific and technology leader on matters related to existing food chains and their digital transformation. Bryan has extensive product and process development expertise in the food and beverage industry across emerging and mature brands, as well as broad & deep experience in new product and technology innovation, ingredients, processing, quality/food safety, supply chain, and people development. He spent much of his career at PepsiCo in such roles as Principal Engineer R&D, Director, R&D (Global Beverages Discover & Applications), and most recently Senior Director, North America Nutrition R&D (Fruits & Vegetables). Prior to PepsiCo, Bryan worked at Procter & Gamble and 3M Company.

**Andrew Kennedy, New Era Technology Team Leader, Office of Food Policy & Response (OFPR), FDA**

Andy Kennedy is the New Era Technology Team (the NETT) Leader in the FDA Office of Food Policy and Response. Mr. Kennedy started working with OFPR in October 2019 as a Subject Matter Expert in Food Traceability. As the NETT Leader, his primary focus is the New Era of Smarter Food Safety, Core Element 1, Tech Enabled Traceability. Prior to his work at the FDA, Mr. Kennedy led IFT's Global Food Traceability Center and co-founded FoodLogiQ, a leading Food Traceability platform for restaurant operators, food companies and retailers. He co-convened traceability standards development working groups for GS1, the Produce Traceability Initiative and the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability. With Jennifer McEntire from United Fresh, Mr. Kennedy edited "Food Traceability from Binders to Blockchain," published by Springer in 2019. Mr. Kennedy holds an MBA from Duke's Fuqua School of Business and an A.B. in Economics from Lafayette College.



**Anita MacMullan, Director, Food & Drug Protection Division, North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**

Anita MacMullan serves as the Director for the Food & Drug Protection Division of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. She is responsible for the division's inspection and laboratory activities related to ensuring the safety of human and animal manufactured foods, Grade A products, shell eggs, produce and drugs manufactured, held or sold in North Carolina. She has 25 years of service with the division including leadership positions in the manufactured food and produce safety programs with responsibility for developing and overseeing inspection, compliance, enforcement and emergency response activities. Ms. MacMullan's career also includes three years with the US Food and Drug Administration in the Division of Federal-State Relations overseeing the distribution and management of funding to support state and local agency food safety efforts. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in microbiology from the University of Rhode Island and held positions in the biotechnology industry conducting research on industrial enzymes and bio-pesticides.

**Susan T. Mayne, Director, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), FDA**

Susan T. Mayne leads the Center's development and implementation of programs and policies related to the composition, quality, safety, and labeling of foods, food and color additives, and cosmetics. Dr. Mayne is an internationally recognized public health leader and scientist who also oversees diet and health initiatives, which include the policy development and management of food and nutrition labeling, as well as the regulation of dietary supplements, medical foods and infant formulas. She came to the FDA from Yale University, where she was the C-E.A. Winslow Professor of Epidemiology.

**Jennifer McEntire, SVP Food Safety & Technology, United Fresh Produce Association**

Dr. Jennifer McEntire is SVP Food Safety & Technology at United Fresh Produce Association. Trained as a food microbiologist, she's spent the past 20 years bringing the science to food safety policy discussions. After receiving her BS in food science from the University of Delaware, she earned her PhD at Rutgers as a USDA National Needs Fellow in Food Safety, which included internships in Washington DC that set the course for her future career. She remembers the day in 2008 when FDA asked that the next IFT task order focus on traceability. She subsequently had the privilege of leading the traceability pilots in support of FSMA Sec 204 as she transitioned to The Acheson Group. She has authored several books, many book chapters, and articles, and is a sought after speaker on traceability and food safety related topics.

**Erik Mettler, Assistant Commissioner for Partnerships and Policy, Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA), FDA**

Erik P. Mettler is Assistant Commissioner for Partnerships and Policy within the Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA) at FDA. In this role, he serves as advisor to the Associate Commissioner for Regulatory Affairs on the full range of ORA's activities including partnerships, implementation of new laws and regulations, and overall strategic planning and prioritization. He is responsible for providing long range strategic direction for ORA policies and programs including the implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act. Mr. Mettler previously served as the Associate Commissioner for Foods and Veterinary Medicine in the Office of Foods and Veterinary Medicine (OFVM). His years of experience at the FDA give him a broad perspective on public health, policy, and administrative management along with an awareness of critical issues at all levels of the agency. Mr. Mettler holds a Master of Public Health from the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University and a Master of Public Administration from the University of New Mexico.



**Brian Pendleton, Senior Policy Advisor, Policy Engagement and Coordination Staff, Office of Policy, Legislation, and International Affairs, FDA**

Brian Pendleton is a Senior Policy Advisor in the Office of Policy, Legislation, and International Affairs in FDA's Office of the Commissioner, where he works primarily on multi-Center rulemakings and guidances concerning the regulation of food, drugs, and biologics. In recent years he has played a significant role in implementing several components of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, including the regulation on foreign supplier verification programs for food importers, the Voluntary Qualified Importer Program, and the adoption of additional traceability recordkeeping requirements for certain foods. Mr. Pendleton received a B.A. and M.A. in political science from Kent State University and a J.D. from the University of Michigan.

**Aliya Sassi, PhD, Senior Economist, Office of Economics and Analysis, Office of Policy, Legislation, and International Affairs, Office of the Commissioner, FDA**

Dr. Aliya Sassi serves as a subject matter expert, lead, and economic consultant to FDA top level management and performs economic analyses of FDA regulations, policies, and programs. Her areas of expertise include regulatory impact analysis, benefit-cost analysis, food safety, international trade, and economic modeling. Previously, Dr. Sassi taught economics at the University of New Hampshire where she completed her graduate training. She has detailed as a Senior Economist at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, where she reviewed documents for policy clearance and conducted analyses of current and prospective Federal activities that affect science and public health. While temporarily acting as Assistant Director of Economics at FDA in 2019, she directed the design and implementation of FDA benefit-cost and other economic analyses in support of Agency policy development and was responsible for review and clearance of the economic analyses of FDA regulations and other activities.

**Kyle Shannon, Chief, Center for Milk and Dairy Product Safety, Office of Food Protection, Maryland Department of Health (MDH)**

Kyle Shannon joined the Maryland Department of Health in June 2013, and currently serves as the Center Chief for Milk and Dairy Product Safety and Acting Center Chief for Food Emergency Response and Defense. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Maryland Baltimore County in 1999 and became a Board Certified Licensed Environmental Health Specialist in the State of Maryland in 2003. In 2016, Kyle completed the Applied Science, Law and Policy: Fellowship in Food Protection through the International Food Protection Training Institute. Prior to joining the Center for Milk and Dairy Product Safety, Kyle served as the Rapid Response Team Coordinator for the Office of Food Protection at Maryland Department of Health. From 2002 until joining the State of Maryland, Kyle was employed by the Anne Arundel County Department of Health where he worked in the Housing and Food Protection Services Program and then as a specialist in the control of Zoonotic and Vector-borne Diseases and served as the Department's primary Emergency Operations Center Representative.

**Sarah Sorscher, Deputy Director of Regulatory Affairs, Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI)**

Sarah Sorscher is Deputy Director of Regulatory Affairs at Center for Science in the Public Interest, where she works to improve consumers' access to information about the food they eat, stop deceptive food advertising, and reduce or remove harmful food additives and contaminants in our food supply. Prior to joining CSPI in 2017, she worked on health and safety issues at Public Citizen's Health Research Group and served as a law clerk for the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. Sarah holds a J.D. from the Harvard Law School, an M.P.H. from Harvard School of Public Health, and a B.A. from Amherst College.

**Hilary Thesmar, Chief Food & Product Safety Officer & Senior VP of Food Safety Programs, FMI**

In her role as the Chief Food & Product Safety Officer & senior vice president of food safety programs for the Food Marketing Institute (FMI), Dr. Thesmar provides leadership for all safety programs for FMI's retail and wholesale members and provides support for members on food safety training programs, FSMA training, recall plans and management, crisis management, research, and overall safety and sanitation programs. She also works with the FMI Foundation on food safety education and research projects. Dr. Thesmar has a Ph.D. in Food Technology from Clemson University, a Master of Science degree in Human Nutrition from Winthrop University, a bachelor's degree in Food Science from Clemson, and she is a Registered Dietitian. She has extensive experience in scientific and regulatory affairs with food trade associations. Dr. Thesmar is an active member of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT), the International Association for Food Protection and the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. She is an active volunteer with the Food and Culinary Dietetic Practice Group of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics holding several leadership positions in recent years.

**Katherine Vierk, Division Director, Division of Public Health Informatics & Analytics, Office of Analytics and Outreach (OAO), CFSAN, FDA**

Katherine Vierk is the Director for the Division of Public Health Informatics and Analytics in the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition at FDA. As Division Director, Ms. Vierk oversees three branches dedicated to internal and external partnerships in epidemiologic research, data analytics, social science research, and signal detection for potential hazards associated with foods, cosmetics, and dietary supplements. She brings more than 20 years of experience working at FDA in the areas of foodborne outbreaks, traceability, epidemiology, consumer science, and data analytics. Ms. Vierk has served in multiple leadership positions at CFSAN, served as acting FDA liaison to CDC, and was part of the team that developed FDA's Coordinated Outbreak Response and Evaluation Network (CORE). She currently leads FDA's traceability rule writing efforts.

**Christopher Waldrop, Senior Health Scientist, Division of Public Health Informatics & Analytics, OAO, CFSAN, FDA**

Chris Waldrop is a Senior Health Scientist in the Office of Analytics and Outreach in the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In this role, Mr. Waldrop provides leadership and guidance on priority policy issues related to the Agency's foods program. He collaborates across the Agency to develop strategic approaches to address current and emerging issues related to food safety and nutrition. Previously, Mr. Waldrop directed the Food Policy Institute at the Consumer Federation of America, where he oversaw the Institute's research, analysis, advocacy and media outreach on a range of food policy issues.

**Frank Yiannas, Deputy Commissioner for Food Policy and Response, FDA**

Frank Yiannas is the principal advisor to the FDA Commissioner on food safety policies, including implementation of the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act. His leadership role in the agency's Office of Food Policy and Response covers a broad spectrum, such as outbreak response, traceback investigations, product recall activities, and supply chain innovation. Mr. Yiannas came to the FDA from leadership roles with Walmart and the Walt Disney Company. He has long been recognized for his role in elevating food safety standards and building food safety management systems based on science and risk.