

FDA Announces Cooperative Agreement to Collaboratively Advance Retail Food Safety Initiatives

November 30, 2022

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is pleased to announce the selection of the four associations for funding under the Retail Food Safety Association Collaborative Cooperative Agreement: Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO); Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO); National Environmental Health Association (NEHA); and National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), which includes subaward funding for the Conference for Food Protection (CFP). The FDA will award up to \$5M under this cooperative agreement program to advance retail food safety initiatives and activities to reduce foodborne illness.

As part of the three-year cooperative agreement program, AFDO, ASTHO, NEHA, NACCHO, and CFP will work with the FDA to advance national retail food program long-term objectives. The intended outcome of the cooperative agreements is to assist retail food regulatory programs and industry in reducing foodborne illness by:

- Implementing effective intervention strategies designed to reduce the occurrence of foodborne illness risk factors;
- Implementing and achieving full conformance with the national retail food regulatory program standards;
- Promoting use of risk-based inspection methods to effectively identify the occurrence of foodborne illness risk factors, conduct root cause analysis, assess gaps in industry active managerial control (AMC), and promote regulatory compliance; promoting adoption of the most recent version of the FDA Food Code; effectively responding to foodborne illness outbreaks; and
- Responding to emerging food safety trends.

The program is also intended to encourage the research, development, and implementation of industry food safety management systems and the prerequisite food safety culture necessary to achieve AMC of foodborne illness risk factors.

“These awards underscore the agency’s strong commitment to working collaboratively with our strategic stakeholders to modernize the nation’s retail food protection program to help achieve success in reducing risk factors that cause foodborne illnesses in this country under the [New Era of Smarter Food Safety](#) initiative, says Erik Mettler, FDA’s Assistant Commissioner for Partnerships and Policy in the Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA).

“FDA’s partnerships with our trusted strategic stakeholders, the retail food industry, state, local, territorial, and tribal authorities, and other government agencies, are a foundational component of this initiative and key to our success in achieving its targeted goals and objectives,” adds Mettler.

The burden associated with foodborne illness is considerable. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that, each year, 48 million people get sick from a foodborne illness, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die. The FDA and its strategic stakeholders are dedicated to the

prevention and mitigation of foodborne illnesses, and these awards represent another step towards achieving that goal.

For questions or comments regarding this new cooperative agreement program, please email the Office of Partnerships in the FDA's ORA at OP.Feedback@fda.hhs.gov.