

Interagency Risk Assessment Consortium Technical Committee Spring Meeting Report

Meeting Date: March 28, 2013

Welcome and Introductions

The Interagency Risk Assessment Consortium (IRAC) held its 2013 spring quarterly meeting of the Technical Committee March 28, 2013. The meeting was hosted by USDA/FSIS. Technical and policy representatives and guests from various agencies (Table 1) participated on site or by phone.

“5 minute” Agency Updates

Representatives in attendance gave a brief overview of food safety risk analysis projects and issues in their agencies that may be of interest to other agencies.

CODEX Update

Kerry Dearfield reported on the upcoming Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods (CCCF), noting that lead and possibly also methyl mercury would be key issues discussed. JECFA has withdrawn a provisional level for lead.

IRAC Work Group Updates

IRAC-IFSAC Risk Assessment as a Method for Determining Attribution to Foodborne Illness

Isabel Walls reported on the workshop and related efforts. The “workshop” included 3 webinars and a face-to-face meeting where discussion was the focus. The decisions from the final meeting were to develop 2 papers from the meeting that included a short summary of the meeting for senior officials and a longer paper for a peer-review journal. The workgroup has completed the short paper and hopes to have the longer paper completed in the future. Isabel Walls also noted that CDC has published a new paper on food attribution:

<http://www.cdc.gov/foodborneburden/attribution.html>

Clarification of the Various Approaches for Assessing Risk

Kerry Dearfield reported the workgroup has completed a draft manuscript titled “Clarification of the various approaches for assessing risk”, which describes the tools available for risk assessment and what each tool can provide. The document was written primarily by Kerry Dearfield, Janell Kause and Karin Hoelzer, and was sent to IRAC for review. The draft was in clearance at FSIS and CFSAN at the time of his report.

Transition in Leadership

Yuhuan Chen, also on behalf of Policy Council co-Chair Sherri Dennis, presented a certificate of appreciation to Kerry Dearfield for serving as Policy Council co-Chair for a number of years. Much appreciation was expressed to Kerry for his years of serving in this capacity, and his leadership to IRAC also serving on IRAC workgroups. Among the many accomplishments during Kerry's tenure, the IRAC charter was revised and resigned by IRAC member representatives. His efforts over the years to support IRAC were instrumental in increasing IRAC visibility within and outside the Federal Government. The IRAC also welcomed Janell Kause as the new Policy Council co-Chair, replacing Kerry Dearfield. We look forward to Kerry's continued support and to working with Janell in this new capacity, as co-Chair of the Policy Council.

Discussions of Strategic Plan and New Activities

Strategic Plan:

The group discussed the 7/26/2011 Strategic Plan and made several recommendations:

- (1) Replace "quantitative" with "qualitative and quantitative" in the third IRAC Goal so that it reads: "(3) Serve as a forum to communicate about risk assessment and related research issues including enhancement of the use of qualitative and quantitative risk assessment in the decision making regulatory process."
- (2) Add new goal: "Improve interaction between and collaboration among federal agency workgroups to leverage resources on common areas of interest."
- (3) Add new bullet and revise another in the list of "Strategies to Achieve Goals" – exact wording will need to be reviewed by IRAC at its next meeting.
 - a. Add the following bullet point to *Improve collaboration among agencies and leverage resources* and modify one bullet point as noted below
 - i. Partner with other risk assessment and analytic groups within the federal government
 - b. Modification: Provide opportunities for research and data collection agencies to collaborate.
- (4) Possibly add another bullet under "Enhance awareness of food safety risk assessment resources" adding data accessibility.

Activities for 2014

It was decided that the ideas generated during the spring IRAC meeting would be used to develop a work plan for FY2014.

Potential workshops

- (1) Dietary Exposure workshop to review and identify the strengths and weaknesses of different dietary exposure databases and estimates (e.g., DEEM, FARE, CRÈME) for different types of risk assessments.
- (2) Food Access workshop to study the relationships between food access, nutritional status, and susceptibility.

- (3) Surveillance sampling – beginning with the new USDA/ORACBA paper on sampling with budget constraints.
- (4) Nanotechnology – Do we want to team up with the National Nanotechnology Initiative?
- (5) Climate Change

Potential Symposia

- (1) ORACBA-IRAC-NCA SRA – mini symposium to share presentations on risk assessment that were not able to be shared at the SRA annual meeting because of budget constraints. *Risk Analysis: Advancing Analysis Workshop* has been planned and will take place June 18, 2013.
- (2) SRA Workshops discussed – one on dietary exposure and one on FDA-iRISK discussed. Submission of workshops was left to the groups most interested in these ideas.
- (3) SRA Symposium – Kerry Dearfield offered to lead the planning for a symposium featuring different types of risk assessments with possible talks from FDA, FSIS, NIOSH, NIH and/or others.

Other Activities

- Update and revise website: IRAC is soliciting members for a revitalization team. Members who have volunteered so far include: Jane Van Doren, Aaron Niman, Stephanie Briguglio, and Leila Lackey.
- Develop and evaluate a member survey to better target activities and meetings of the IRAC to serve its members.

Presentation

Rachel Johnson from USDA/FSIS presented “Qualitative and Quantitative Tools for Assessing the Risks from STECS.” The qualitative tool FSIS developed was a risk profile on non-O157 STEC. She discussed the problem, approach – including the selection of this tool for the intended purpose – and the six risk assessment questions they answered. She also discussed the review of the risk profile and how it has been used. The risk profile is available from: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Non_O157_STEC_Risk_Profile_May2012.pdf.

The quantitative tool developed was the *Beef Slaughter Interventions E. coli O157 Risk Assessment*. She described the motivation for the risk assessment, the approach taken – including the data evaluated and the model structure. The presentation illustrated how interventions were incorporated into the model and the presented model results. The presentation concluded with a brief discussion of how the risk assessment has been used to improve food safety.

Table 1. Attendance (participated onsite or by phone)

Last Name	First Name	Agency
Abbott	Linda	USDA ORACBA
Akhter	Shamima	EPA OW
Alves	Derron	DOD VSA
Anekwe	Toby	USDA ERS
Bartholomew	Mary	FDA CVM
Briguglio	Stephanie	FDA CFSAN
Chen	Yuhuan	FDA CFSAN
Dearfield	Kerry	USDA FSIS
Dennis	Sherri	FDA CFSAN
Domesle	Alexander	USDA FSIS
Hall	Wendy	USDA APHIS
Hearl	Frank	CDC NIOSH
Hoelzer	Karin	FDA CFSAN
Intano	Gabriel	DOD PHC
Johnson	Rachel	USDA FSIS
Kause	Janell	USDA FSIS
Lackey	Leila	FDA ORA
Lamont	Martha	USDA AMS
Niman	Aaron	EPA OPP
Pouillot	Régis	FDA CFSAN
Powell	Mark	USDA ORACBA
Van Doren	Jane	FDA CFSAN
Walls	Isabel	USDA NIFA
Walters	Bob E	DOD VSA
Wang-Cahill	Fan	USDA APHIS
Yaeger	Phil	FDA CTP
Zhou	Wen	FDA NCTR