

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DATCP)  
RETAIL FOOD SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

January 23, 2026

Kalahari Resort 1305 Kalahari Drive, Baraboo and Microsoft Teams Webinar

**Attendees:** Jeffery Bord, Brian Hobbs, Lindy Wiedmeyer, Cheri Schweitzer, Caren Johnson, Jennifer Comeau, Danielle Baerwald, John Chastan, Troy Sprecker, Chris Hinz, Hsing-Yi Hsieh, Katie Fuhrmann, Jessica Hoover, Susan Quam, Stefanie Moccero, Courtney Kempfert, Adam Brock, Ryan Bennett, Katie Roberts, Anthony Reams, Sarah Scanlan

**A. Call to Order :** 9:00AM, Introductions

**B. Additions to Agenda** -none

**C. Consideration of Minutes**-typo needing to be corrected, Jeff Bord Motion, Danielle Baerwald Second Motion

**D. Public Comment (The committee requests comments be limited to five minutes or less)**

**E. Disclosures and Recusals**-none

**F. Membership Update(s)**-

1. Festival Foods acquisition occurred. Integration in process.

**G. Member Issues (Members can bring forth issues to the committee of concern)**

1. Issue related to cottage food issue: Seeing all over the state in every jurisdiction: Meal preparation occurring in homes/garages and sold to the public and being shared on social media. Operators are frustrated with lack of enforcement and there appears to be no cohesive plan. Need to get to a point where there is enforcement. Complaints are sometimes made but being told the resources are not there. Those paying the licensing fees would like their fees to go toward enforcement. If there is not a handle on it, someone will get sick.
  - i. Meat facilities must put a legend on their product. How can we better educate. Often people don't even understand what the legend is. Maybe this all comes together? No legend from a county perspective.
  - ii. Chris: We share your frustration. Exurbanite number of complaints regarding facilities operating without a license and selling TCS foods come in. Department did have a plan in place and issued numerous Cease and Desist. The department is taking this seriously and has a plan for facilities we find. Still an inconsistency with agents, and sanitarians have to work within what their Corp council can do. There are hurdles in that area. The education piece is important.

- iii. Hearing that counties are unable to take action, and WRA would be willing to have discussions about the topic, including at League of Municipalities
- iv. DATCP would appreciate reach out to League of Municipalities, cannot monitor all Facebook/media posts. We should connect to the groups that these people are getting information from. The education component needs to go through non-traditional means.
- v. A lot of it is the Cottage Food Network, Madison Foodies, Milwaukee Food Network. We need to get the message out more frequently.
- vi. Consider the topic of retail requirements for food safety class, it could be a starting point.
  - 1. Jeff is an instructor for the food safety class: everyone in the industry receives the same information.
  - 2. Cheri is also a trainer, but as a guess most people operating without a license are likely not taking the course.
  - 3. Some of the people are from industry, and less people are taking the course.
- vii. What tools does the state have if an individual/unlicensed facility causes an illness?
  - 1. DHS does have a complaint tool to obtain reports and does investigate foodborne illnesses. DHS partners with jurisdictions.
  - 2. At the local level there is the ability to fine for operating without a license and issue a Cease and Desist, can go to a judge for if the Cease & Desist is violated.
  - 3. Often investigations stall when the public realizes the link to unlicensed facilities.
- viii. Challenge example: in some cases, the health department has been taken to court over this issue. Some jurisdictions hand it over to law enforcement, but it is low on the list.
- ix. Senate Bill 739: Does require home inspection, worth looking at. Will talk about in the legislative update.

## 2. Avian Influenza

- i. 31,000 tests, only one positive. The farms in the radius were good. Ongoing testing will be at 100% in February. Unsure where we will be in March and April. Working with the farm. Pasteurization and cooking work to inactivate the virus. Less concern.

## H. Artificial Intelligence

- 1. No updates

## I. DATCP Issues/Updates

1. State had a total of 7,075 inspections. 1.34 hours per inspection field time.
2. Compliance actions take about 15% of our staff's time.
3. Listeria sampling project taking place at state facilities for surveillance and education
  - i. Mainly focused on grocery, swabbing activities will be random, but looking at areas where cleaning is an issue. Keypads, food prep surfaces, meat saws,
  - ii. Environmental sampling, not for compliance. Education is the goal.
  - iii. Go through cycles on the sampling. It will only be DATCP areas, not agent areas. Will be figuring out the process. Next year will probably roll out to the agents. Purely educational and wanting to understand if we have an issue in particular areas. 4 or 5 swabs and the same everywhere we go, and then discretion of the sanitarian about where else to swab.
  - iv. Various classes are occurring for meat plants of swabbing. Concern for meat industry is overlap. How do we set plants up for success?
    1. Limited in surveillance-3 in each unit, so 9 swab locations and focused mainly on grocery.
    2. Training driven, focus was to give small and midsize plants a model for monitoring and surveillance.
    3. Would love for the classes to be afforded more often and for the class to handle how to handle results once a positive is received.
  - v. What is being swabbed for, *Listeria monocytogenes* or just species?
    1. Species, and then education provided.
    2. Work with establishments on a food safety plan.
    3. We are regulatory, but this is surveillance.
    4. We are challenged for resources, but focusing those resources to search for problems and address them if found.
4. Doing second school inspections.
5. Agent evaluation project working toward consistency.
6. Standardization training plan for the year to drive consistency throughout our agent areas. Food scientists are standardizing a lot of staff.
7. Discussion in office team for training and updates efforts.
8. Any additional updates on the new Lodging Code?
  - i. Development of a fact sheet for the changes that is going through the review process for release.
  - ii. New code takes effect next week, but using the first year as an education piece for any debits that are found under the new code unless

they are aspects of health and safety. Licensing changes-new fees are not applied until April 1<sup>st</sup> so any applications prior to that will still be under the current fee structure.

iii. There is a rec policy team that does collect issues.

9. A new bill in animal health that created pause.

## 1. Manufactured Food

- a. Currently in the midst of completing contract inspection work, about 30% complete.
- b. Beginning stages of identifying changes for ATCP70 for scope statement, try to harmonize rule for Federal rule 21.17.
- c. Completed bottled water sampling
- d. Are manufacturing and retail working together for traceability?
  - i. Have a workgroup set up. We do not know what is going to come about for traceability and are learning ourselves.
  - ii. Challenge of tracking, how regulatory might think about it and how the reality of it might go
  - iii. There is outreach and a few surveys. Partnership industry to help this workgroup understand what questions to ask.
  - iv. DATCP looking to take the cooperative approach.
- e. Any updates on Produce Safety Advisory?
  - i. Next meeting will talk about potential wind down.
  - ii. Talk about continued communication as there is value to the relationships that are established.
- f. Break 10:30-10:40

## J. State Committee Updates (Section Manager, Retail Food and Recreational Technical Section or designee)

1. Limited meetings occurred.
2. Reviewing a lot of policies, ensure that any only policies are being removed during the SharePoint migration, and updating all policies to ensure they are up to date within the new codes.
3. HealthSpace Updates
  - i. Challenges with getting 72 updated within HealthSpace.
  - ii. Reporting tools have been a challenge, but appears that those have been worked out. Not yet rolled out to agent areas yet.

## K. Retail Policy Committee

1. None
2. Bulk dispensing of beverage dispensing for single use

**L. Handout Committee**

1. None.

**M. Equipment Committee**

1. None.
2. New equipment on campus, botrista (robot barista), semi self-cleaning, run into dating issues.

**N. Other Outstanding Committee work-Risk Factor Workgroup**

1. None.

**O. National Committee Updates**

1. None.

**P. Legislative Updates**

1. Tuesday hearing in the transportation and local government committee. Hearing on SB739: Bill would put regulations in place for cottage food industry. Bakers, Grocers and Restaurant Association wanted to get legislature talking about no regulations on cottage food industry. There are many folks producing over \$100,000 per year in unlicensed facilities. Feel there needs to be some regulations in place, for example after \$40,000 in sales, no longer considered a cottage food. \$10-40,000 would be required to take a food safety course. Component that would require registration with DATCP and some type of inspection process, does not have to be a face to face inspection-could be virtual.
2. Is there anyone in the cheese world at any level that can make and sell product without a license in the state of WI?
  - i. That falls under the Dairy side of things. Unaware of anyone but they would require a dairy license.
3. Why is there a gray area for retail when there isn't one for dairy?
  - i. History, changes in food trends.
4. Considerations of how complicated laws are.
5. There are no cottage laws currently, result of a lawsuit.
6. Groceries active on labeling requirements for meat.
7. Tracking 40 bills right now.
8. Hemp derived THC bills, there are 4 of them. Some of the bill authors are in negotiations to come up with a compromised bill that puts oversight in manufactured foods over distribution and creation of hemp products. It would mirror alcohol bills for THC products besides the beverages. Authors of those bills are trying to come up with compromise.

**Q. Action Items**

1. Dates for future meetings.

- i.** April 24
- ii.** July 24
- iii.** October 23

**2.** Sarah must contact Joy in the sales office as John will be out.

**R.** Future Meeting: April 24, 2026

**S. Adjourn** Danielle Motion, Katie Roberts Second 11:17am