

WHAT'S NEW AT Q

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An ISO/IEC 17025 Accredited Laboratory

FROM THE COO's DESK



With the focus of the food industry remaining on the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), the term that keeps popping up is Preventive Controls. While the term covers a wide swath of issues and considerations, one relatively simple way to apply preventive controls is through an environmental monitoring program. Utilizing swabs or sponges, or any of a myriad of sampling

implements now available, to check areas that come into direct, or indirect, contact with food products, can be a cost-effective way to apply preventive controls. Whether it is swabbing trucks or train cars as part of the Safe Transport Rule, or crates and skids as part of the Produce Rule, or grocery stores shelves, restaurant prep areas or delicatessens, assuring the areas adjacent to food are free of contamination is a positive step toward keeping food products contamination free. And this can be accomplished in a cost effective and seamless manner. Q Laboratories can send you the sampling supplies you need in a cooler with cool packs and sampling instructions. After you take the samples, be they swabs or sponges, etc., you ship them back to our facility for testing. Our microbiologists can also help you determine what tests you should be conducting, such as indicator organisms, pathogens, allergens, or some combination. As is often the case, a little due diligence up front may prevent a more serious problem down the road and demonstrate to regulators/inspectors your commitment to preventive controls.

David G. Goins

David G. Goins, COO

ACCOUNTABILITY

In January, the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a 52-page report entitled, "Food Safety: A National Strategy Is Needed to Address Fragmentation in Federal Oversight." While consumers correctly assume the FDA and USDA are primarily responsible for food safety oversight, the fact is 16 Federal agencies have a hand in regulating the safety of the food supply including, the Department of Commerce, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Homeland Security Department, and the Treasury Department. According to the GAO, this fragmentation helps contribute to the number of foodborne illness outbreaks each year, resulting in approximately 128,000 consumers being hospitalized and 3000 deaths each year. The report points out that three reasons better oversight is needed are, "a substantial and increasing portion of the U.S. food supply is imported, which stretches the federal government's ability to ensure the safety of these foods. Second, consumers are eating more raw and minimally processed foods, which in general are more susceptible to foodborne pathogens. Third, segments of the population that are particularly susceptible to foodborne illnesses, such as older adults and immune-compromised individuals, are growing. The GAO has recommended simplifying the fragmented food safety system as far back as 1970 and as recently as 2016. While admitting the contraction of the system would be complex, the GAO believes a unified system would be more effective.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Fran Nunan has been named Vice-President of Human Resources for Q Laboratories. Fran brings a wealth of experience to the company after leading the HR departments at Hydro Systems Company and School Outfitters, as well as operating her own HR Consulting firm. Fran holds the Senior Certified Professional (SCP) designation, as well as the Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) certification. She will be tasked with continuing the talent pipeline by recruiting and hiring scientists and support personnel.

Bobby Loew has been appointed Facility Engineer at Q Laboratories. He will oversee the ongoing expansion and optimization of the company's facilities as well the maintenance and upkeep of all current facilities. Bobby is a Certified Electrician and has over 25 years of experience in industrial construction and renovation.

Kenny Zampelli has been promoted to Media Prep Supervisor. Kenny will provide leadership for the department tasked with preparing all the microbiological media for the laboratories, as well as sterilizing and discarding all infectious waste generated, while adhering to strict quality guidelines. Kenny had previously served as Chemistry Lab Group Leader—Pharma for Q Laboratories.

SAFETY NET

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released the Preliminary FoodNet data from 2016. FoodNet (Foodborne Diseases Active Surveillance Network) is the CDC tool for. "Documenting trends in foodborne illness—identifying which illnesses are decreasing and which are increasing—is essential to the overall goal of reducing foodborne illness." Each year, FoodNet reports on changes in the number of people in the United States sickened with infections from pathogens transmitted commonly through food. The 2016 data indicate Campylobacter and Salmonella remain the two most common causes of foodborne illness, and the number of Campylobacter, Salmonella, Shigella, Vibrio and Yersinia infections grew 114% in 2016, compared to the 2013–2015 average. However, this increase may be somewhat attributable to better tracking techniques and improved detection methods.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

What does reducing the turn-around time for Yeast and Mold from five days to three do for you? It allows for a 40% decrease in inventory, thereby allowing for utilization of that refrigeration or warehouse space, or eliminating it altogether.

TRADE SHOWS

Q Laboratories, Inc. will have representatives at the following industry events in the upcoming months:

- ▶ **Food Safety Summit**, May 9-11, Rosemont, IL (Booth# 110)
- ▶ **National Restaurant Association Show**, May 20-23, Chicago; (Booth# 7282)
- ▶ **IFT Annual Meeting and Expo**, June 26-28, Las Vegas; (Booth# 2619)
- ▶ **IAFP Annual Meeting**, July 9-12, Tampa, FL; (Booth# 904)