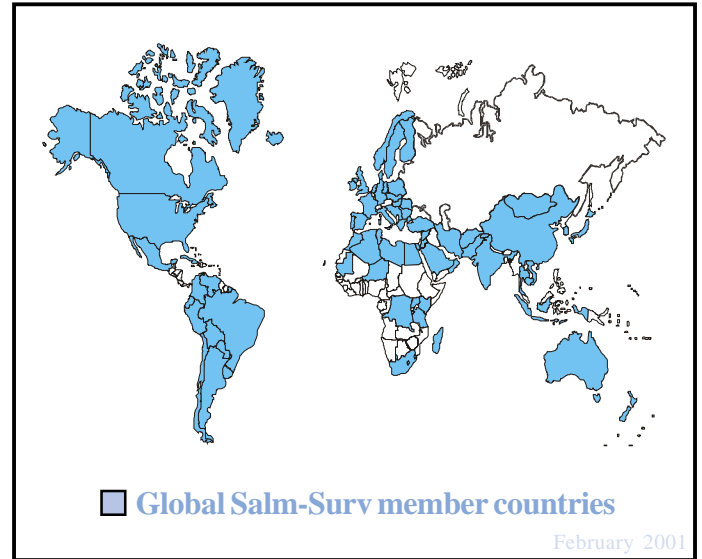


FoodNet News

WHO Global Salm-Surv: Global *Salmonella* Surveillance

WHO Global Salm-Surv is a global network of laboratories and individuals involved in *Salmonella* surveillance, identification, isolation, and antimicrobial testing. As of February 2001, WHO Global Salm-Surv has 353 members from 115 different countries. WHO Global Salm-Surv is a collaborative project of the World Health Organization (WHO), the Danish Veterinary Laboratory, and the WHO Collaborating Center for Foodborne Disease Surveillance at CDC. The primary goal of the network is to strengthen and enhance national and regional laboratory capacities in the surveillance of *Salmonella* through 1) an electronic discussion group 2) training courses 3) a country databank and 4) an external quality assurance system.

WHO Global Salm-Surv enables countries around the world to share information about *Salmonella* by serving as a forum for web-based, electronic discussions that address issues such as *Salmonella* serotyping and antimicrobial susceptibility testing. The WHO Global Salm-Surv training courses provide information about the epidemiology of foodborne diseases and standardized laboratory methods for testing *Salmonella* (e.g., serotyping, isolating and antimicrobial susceptibility testing methods). Member countries will report annually into a web-based country databank the top 15 *Salmonella* serotypes isolated. Even-



tually, these data will allow members to compare trends in *Salmonella*, by region. The external quality assurance system, which focuses on isolation and antimicrobial resistance testing methods, is an additional tool for producing reliable, high quality, laboratory results.

Persons who are involved in *Salmonella* surveillance, serotyping, or antimicrobial susceptibility testing and would like to become WHO Global Salm-Surv members, and persons who want to learn more about WHO Global Salm-Surv, may visit the website at <http://www.who.int/salmsurv>.

FoodNet Activities

Environmental Health Specialists team up with FoodNet to form “EHS-Net”

EHS-Net, a network of environmental health specialists and epidemiologists, is a new project created to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas between epidemiologists and environmental health specialists especially relating

to “environmental” causes of foodborne illness.

An initial goal of EHS-Net is to place an environmental health specialist in seven of the participating FoodNet

(continued on page 3)

Inside this issue:

- ◆ Global Salm-Surv
- ◆ EHS-Net
- ◆ ICEID meeting
- ◆ Food Irradiation



International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases (ICEID), 2000

The ICEID conference held in Atlanta, Georgia, in July 2000 had a strong FoodNet presence. FoodNet members from around the United States presented their research and findings, illustrating FoodNet's valuable contributions to foodborne disease research. Findings from the most recent FoodNet population-based survey, FoodNet active surveillance, and FoodNet case-control studies are highlighted below.

- Based on responses from the 1998/1999 population-based survey, there is substantial room for improvement in knowledge, attitudes, and practices concerning antibiotic use. Over half of the respondents were not aware of the health dangers associated with inappropriate antibiotic use.
- Analysis of the *Campylobacter* case-control study suggests that foreign travel is an important risk factor for both sporadic *Campylobacter* infections and fluoroquinolone-

resistant *Campylobacter* infections. Risk factors for domestically acquired *Campylobacter* infections include the consumption of poultry and other meats outside the home, unpasteurized milk or raw seafood, untreated water, and contact with farm animals or puppies. Males are also at a higher risk of developing domestically acquired *Campylobacter* infections.

FoodNet surveillance data show no decline in the incidence of *Listeria* or *Escherichia coli* O157 infections from 1996 to 1998; however, there was a notable decline in the incidence of salmonellosis from 1996 to 1998.

To view the list of topics presented at the conference, please visit our website (http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/foodnet/whats_new/2000_iceid.htm). FoodNet looks forward to an even stronger presence at the next ICEID in March 2002 in Atlanta, GA.

FOODNET CONGRATULATES

Paul Frenzen
Beletshachew Shiferaw

on their recent publications!



Frenzen P, Majchrowicz A, Buzby B, Imhoff B and the FoodNet Working Group. Consumer Acceptance of Irradiated Meat and Poultry Products. *Agriculture Information Bulletin*, 2000; 757: 1-8.

Shiferaw B, Yang S, Cieslak P, Vugia D, Marcus R, Koehler J, Deneen V, Angulo F. Prevalence of high-risk food consumption and food-handling practices among adults: a multistate survey, 1996 to 1997. *The Foodnet Working Group. Journal of Food Protection*. 63(11):1538-1543, 2000 November.

Meat and Poultry Irradiation

To better understand consumers' attitudes about and knowledge of irradiated food products, FoodNet added a "food irradiation module" to its 1998/1999 population-based survey. The food irradiation questions centered around consumers' knowledge about irradiation, their willingness to buy irradiated meats, reasons they would not buy irradiated meats, and whether they would pay extra for irradiated meats. The survey found that only 48 percent of the respondents had ever heard of food irradiation and about 50 percent were willing to buy irradiated meat or poultry. Of those willing to buy irradiated meat or poultry, 23% were willing to pay more for the product. These data reveal that consumer education about irradiated meat and poultry is essential to the success of these products on the market.

In February 2000, the Federal Government approved irradiation of raw meat and poultry by food manufacturers as a measure to control disease-causing organisms such as *E. coli* and

Salmonella. Food irradiation is a food safety technology in which foods are treated with ionizing radiation to reduce or eliminate disease-causing germs (i.e., bacteria and parasites). Irradiation does not substantially change the nutritional value of food, and usually does not greatly alter the taste or texture of the food. This safe and effective technology could help prevent foodborne illnesses and death due to pathogenic organisms in meat. Manufacturers have been hesitant to adopt irradiation because of their perception that few consumers are willing to buy irradiated meat and because of the high costs of irradiation equipment.

To learn more about irradiation and to view the article, "Consumer Acceptance of Irradiated Meat and Poultry Products," please see either of the following websites:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/foodirradiation.htm>

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/epubs/pdf/aib757/>

FoodNet Announces Vision Meeting

**The annual FoodNet Vision Meeting will take place on
March 8 -9, 2001 in Atlanta, GA**

Preceding the Vision Meeting:

Coordinator Meeting March 7, 2001, 1-5 pm
EHS-Net/FoodNet Meeting March 7, 2001, all day

Welcome to FoodNet

FoodNet Welcomes Sara Ehlers, Jenny Lay, Stewart Johnson, and Lori Williams



(Left to Right: Stewart Johnson, Jenny Lay, Sara Ehlers, Lori Williams)

CDC (Atlanta, Georgia)

Sara Ehlers, a recent Rollins School of Public Health (Emory University) graduate, joined the CDC FoodNet team as an epidemiologist in June 2000. Sara's primary projects include maintaining the FoodNet active surveillance database, coordinating the 2000 laboratory survey, and serving as a CDC representative on an infant illness analysis team. Jenny Lay, a former MPH student at Emory's Rollins School of Public Health who has worked with FoodNet since June 2000, came on board as a full-time epidemiologist after she graduated in Decem-

ber 2000. Jenny will maintain the HUS surveillance database and take on additional projects. Stewart Johnson joined the FoodNet team as a computer programmer in September 2000. His primary responsibility is to support the FoodNet SAS application, which is the core computer program used to bring active surveillance numbers into the FoodNet database. Lori Williams joined FoodNet as an administrative assistant in August 2000. Lori will provide administrative support to the FoodNet group at CDC. Welcome to FoodNet, Sara, Jenny, Stewart, and Lori!

EHS-Net

(continued from page 1)

sites to design and conduct studies concerning restaurants and assist in foodborne outbreak investigations. Each environmental specialist will work closely with FoodNet epidemiologists and the food protection program in their state.

EHS-Net held its first meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, in September 2000. Three important goals were discussed: 1) Designing a study of foodborne illness due to eating at restaurants 2) Designing a survey of food safety practices at restaurants 3) Adding a "restaurant module" to the FoodNet population-based survey. A training session for all EHS-Net environmental health specialists will be held in February 2001 in Atlanta, Georgia. This project is a collaborative effort of FoodNet, the Environmental Health Services Branch of the National Center for Environmental Health at CDC, the Food and Drug Administration, and seven of the FoodNet sites. Please visit our website for a description of EHS-Net and an overview of the September meeting.

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Spotlight on Maryland's New Site Coordinator

Dr. Marguerite Hawkins joined the Maryland FoodNet team as their new site coordinator in July 2000. Dr. Hawkins received her medical degree from Eastern Virginia Medical School and recently completed her Masters in Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine at University of Maryland School of Medicine. In addition to working with FoodNet, Dr. Hawkins holds an Assistant Professorship of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine at University of Maryland's School of Medicine. Dr. Hawkins is enthusiastic about her new position and would "like to examine the problem of foodborne illness in Maryland, evaluate how it is similar or different in other EIP sites, and look for ways to prevent it." We welcome Dr. Hawkins!

Note: Mailing List

In an effort to make *FoodNet News* more widely accessible and to conserve paper, the newsletter is now available on the web (<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/foodnet>) in both Adobe Acrobat and html format. If you do not have Web access and wish to remain on our "paper" mailing list, or if you do have Web access and wish to be notified via email when new *FoodNet News* issues are available on our website, please fill out and return the inserted card. If we do not receive a card from you, we will remove you from the paper mailing list and assume that you will visit our website. Thank you for your interest in the newsletter!

Note to Readers: We're eager to spotlight other studies in future "*FoodNet News*" issues. Is there a project you'd like to know more about? Is there a new member of your FoodNet team that you would like to introduce? Please contact us!

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