For more information about FoodNet, see the FoodNet website:
http://www.cdc.gov/foodnet

From the Foodborne and Diarrheal Diseases Branch (FDDB), Division of Bacterial and Mycotic Diseases, National Center for Infectious Diseasea

FoodNet News

Volume 4, No. 1 , Fall 2002

Questions & Answers About FoodNet's Latest Publication:

"Preliminary Data on the Incidence of Foodborne Illnesses (Selected Sites, US, 2001)"

Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) April 19, 2002

Q: What is the key point?

During the past 6 years, the incidence rates of infections caused by *Yersinia, Listeria, Campylobacter,* and *Salmonella* have declined substantially. These declines indicate important progress toward achieving the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's *Healthy People 2010* objectives for reducing the incidence of several foodborne diseases by the end of the decade.

Q: What is the likely reason for these declines?

Since food animals are a major source of *Yersinia, Listeria, Campylobacter,* and *Salmonella*, a major contributing factor to the decline in the incidence of foodborne infections caused by these pathogens is likely the implementation of pathogen reduction/hazard analysis critical control point (PR/HACCP) systems regulations in the meat and poultry slaughter and processing plants. The prevalence of *Salmonella* isolated from FSIS-regulated products has declined substantially since these regulations were implemented by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS)

Inside this issue:

Q: Are there other possible reasons for these declines?

Several other interventions that were introduced during the past several years may have also contributed to the declines in the incidence of foodborne infections. These interventions include egg quality assurance programs for the prevention of *Salmonella* Enteriditis infections, increased attention to fresh produce safety through better agricultural practices on farms and food processing facilities, the regulation of fruit and vegetable juices, industry efforts to reduce food contamination, food safety education, and increased regulation of imported food.

Q: Were there any emerging foodborne diseases discussed?

The increase in the incidence of infections caused by Salmonella Newport, particularly multidrug-resistant Salmonella Newport, represents an emerging challenge to public health. FoodNet recently began a case-control study of sporadic cases of Salmonella Newport to determine risk factors and opportunities for prevention.
For the complete article, please link to the MMWR Web site at:
http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/

FOODNET 2002 POPULATION SURVEY

This year, FoodNet launches the fourth 12-month cycle of the Population Survey. Interviewers will contact randomly selected residents in the FoodNet sites and ask a variety of questions. Participants who report having had recent diarrheal illness will be asked whether they sought medical attention for the illness. And those who did seek medical care will be asked whether they submitted a stool specimen to a clinical laboratory. Participants' responses in combination with the laboratory-based surveillance data will assist FoodNet to estimate the total burden of foodborne disease.

Previous Population Surveys

- In 1996, 9,003 interviews were conducted in the original 5 sites.
- In 1998, 2 additional sites were added, and 12,255 interviews were conducted in the 7 sites.
- In 2000, an additional site was added and 14,647 interviews were conducted in the 8 sites.

FoodNet created the 1996 Atlas of Exposures and the 1998 Atlas of Exposures using the cumulative FoodNet Population Survey data. These can be accessed from the web:
http://www.cdc.gov/foodnet/surveys/Pop_surv.htm
The 2000 Atlas of Exposures is currently being compiled.

2002 Population Survey

This year the catchment area has expanded once again. It now includes all of Maryland; Broomfield County, Colorado; and Erie, Wyomie, and Niagra counties in New York. This year's survey will be conducted in Spanish as well as English. FoodNet's goal is to obtain 16,000 interviews for this cycle. Please visit our Web site for more information about the FoodNet Population Survey.
http://www.cdc.gov/foodnet/surveys/pop_cov.htm

FOODNET WELCOMES NEW STAFF!

FoodNet welcomes Luenda Charles, Anyana Banerjee, & Molly Frierman!

Luenda Charles is FoodNet's new senior epidemiologist. She received a Ph.D. in Epidemiology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and an MPH in Occupational and Environmental Health from Emory University. She formerly worked as the co-principal investigator of the Jackson Heart Study in Jackson, Mississippi.

Anyana Banerjee is FoodNet's newest surveillance epidemiologist. Anyana graduated from Emory with an MPH and has worked for the CDC's National Center for Environmental Health and the Agency for Toxic Substances & Disease Registry in surveillance and assessment projects.

Molly Frierman joins FoodNet as a health communications specialist. She has an MSEd and is currently at the dissertation stage of a Ph.D. in Urban Health Services from Old Dominion University in Norfolk, VA.

(From left to right, Luenda Charles, Anyana Banerjee, and Molly Frierman)

FOODNET

CONGRATULATE

PAUL FRENZEN

ON HIS RECENT FOODNET PUBLICATION!!!

Paul Frenzen – "Consumer Acceptance of Irradiated Meat and Poultry in the United States," December 2001 issue of Journal of Food Protection: http://apt.allenpress.com/aptonline/?request=get-issue&issn=0362-028X&volume=064&issue=12

International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases (ICEID) 2002

In March 2002, 2,500 health professionals met in Atlanta for the 3rd International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases. FoodNet presentations included current surveillance work, epidemiology research, and prevention and control efforts pertaining to foodborne diseases in the United States. On page 3 is a list of the 20 FoodNet abstracts that were presented.

FoodNet Presentations at the 3rd International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases (ICEID) March 2002, Atlanta, GA

1. **Angulo, F.**, et al. Marked Regional Variation in the Incidence of Labratory-confirmed Bacterial Foodborne Illness: FoodNet, 2000.
2. **Braden, C.,** et al. Microbiologic Testing to Identify Shiga Toxin-producing *E. coli* in HUS Patients.
3. **DeLong, S.**, et al. Comparison of Disease Severity Between Outbreaks of Known and Unknown Etiology, with > 10 Ill Persons, FoodNet Sites, 1999--2000.
4. **Finke, M.,** et al. Hospitalizations among Cases with the Most Common Serotypes of *Salmonella*: FoodNet, 1996--2000.
5. **Garman, R.,** et al. A Pilot Study in FoodNet of the Use of Stool Collection Kits Delivered to the Home to Improve Confirmation of Etiology in Gastroenteritis Outbreak Investigations.
6. **Garman, R.,** et al. Restaurant Associated Behavior from the FoodNet Population Survey 1998--99.
7. **Hadler, J**., et al. Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Regarding Use of Irradiated Meats and Pasteurized Eggs in Healthcare Institutions, Universities, and Restaurants in Connecticut.
8. **Hardnett, F**., et al. Comparability of FoodNet and United States Populations.
9. **Hawkins, M.,** et al. The Burden of Diarrheal Illness in FoodNet, 2000--2001.
10. **Jones, T**., et al. Eating in Restaurants: A Risk Factor for Foodborne Illness? Findings from FoodNet to be Explored by EHS-Net.
11. **Kennedy, M**., et al. Risk Factors for Sporadic *Escherichia coli O157* Infections in the United States: A Case-Control Study in FoodNet Sites, 1999--2000.
12. **Klatka, L**., et al. Risk Factors for Sporadic *Campylobacter* Infection in Maryland.
13. **Koehler, K**., et al. Population-Based Incidence of Infection with Selected Enteric Bacterial Pathogens for Children under 5 Years of Age, FoodNet, 1996--1998.
14. **Lay, J.,** et al. Higher Incidence of Listeria Infections among Hispanics: FoodNet, 1996--2000.
15. **Lee. S**., et al. Drinking Water Exposures and Perceptions among 1998--1999 FoodNet Survey Respondents.
16. **Marcus, R.,** et al. Age and Ethnic and Racial Disparity in *Salmonella* Serotype Enteritidis (SE): FoodNet, 1998-2000.
17. **Phan. Q**., et al. Epidemiology of ShigaToxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) Infections in Connecticut, February 1, 2000-- January 31, 2001.
18. **Shiferaw, B.,**et al. Surveillance for Guillain-Barre Syndrome in Oregon.
19. **Varma, J**., et al. Antimicrobial Resistance in Salmonella Is Associated with Increased Hospitalization; FoodNet and NARMS 1996--2000.
20. **Voestch, A.**, et al. Stool Specimen Practices in Clinical Laboratories, FoodNet Sites 1995--2000.

~FOODNET'S ANNUAL VISION MEETING: MARCH 2002~

This year's FoodNet Vision Meeting took place on March 7th & 8th in Atlanta, GA. The meeting brought together epidemiologists from each of the 9 sites, the CDC, the USDA, and the FDA and, for the first time, included state public health laboratory representatives. The meeting provided participants with an opportunity to reflect on how FoodNet has evolved over the past 6 years, examine last year's priorities, and prioritize FoodNet's objectives for 2003. In addition to ongoing efforts, the general FoodNet priorities for the coming year were determined to be:

1 Studying antibiotic resistance (inlcuding multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* Newport)
2 Studying foodborne disease outbreaks of unknown etiology
3 Comparing FoodNet data with data available from the USDA and FDA in order to increase our ability to estimate the fraction of human disease attributable to food commodities
4 Studying Norwalk-like viruses (and how to prevent those infections)
5 Studying *E. coli* O157

FoodNet News

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FOODNET IN ACTION:

FOODNET/NARMS RETAIL FOOD STUDY

The Foodborne Diseases Active Surveillance Network (FoodNet) and The National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS) have recently launched The Retail Food Study to determine 1) the prevalence of food contamination by *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* and 2) the antimicrobial resistance among those and other pathogens in samples of ground beef, ground turkey, pork chops, and chicken in grocery stores. FoodNet sites in Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Minnesota, and Tennessee will participate in the study in collaboration with the FDA's Center for Veterinary Medicine. The Retail Food Study will extend previous research and will also help determine the extent of antimicrobial resistance among bacteria in the food supply.

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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