



Connecting the Dots: An interactive session

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Reminder of Conference Objectives

- Increase vertical and lateral communications among federal, state and local public health and emergency management partners in the Great Lakes Border Health Initiative region
- Clarify the roles, responsibilities, and authorities of food and public health agencies in Canada and the United States.



Reminder of Conference Objectives

- Identify epidemiological and laboratory surveillance and investigation strategies for foodborne illness and deliberate attacks on the food supply and improve the effectiveness of disease control efforts in the Great Lakes Region.
- Improve international responses to food contamination incidents in the Great Lakes Region by strengthening relationships between key staff from public health and food agencies.
- Enhance infectious disease surveillance at the international borders.



Where are the weakest links?

- Surveillance methods
(food product vs. human disease)
- Early detection/incident recognition
- Notifications/information sharing
- Data analysis/trend monitoring
- Response and control actions
- Communication and coordination





Consider some recent examples

- *E. coli* O157 infections linked to baby spinach
- Botulism from contaminated carrot juice
- Salmonellosis linked to peanut butter

How did we do?



Implications of the IHR (2005) for foodborne disease events

- Currently significant international events are shared through INFOSAN (International Food Safety Authorities Network)
- INFOSAN emergency contact and IHR focal points are expected to work together in reporting to WHO
- Spinach outbreak would have been reportable



Identifying Short and Long Term Objectives of Mutual Interest

- Enhancing Great Lakes region risk management capabilities: protecting the food supply from both intentional and non-intentional threats
- Improving communications – conducting a simple baseline of currently available networking/information sharing options (example: FoodSHIELD website)
- Expanding membership – targeting others to involve in the Great lakes Region (eg industry)
- Building on the Table Top exercise or other joint exercises



Identifying Short and Long Term Objectives of Mutual Interest

- Increase communication/information sharing between state/provincial foodborne illness investigators (ID who they go to folks are and sharing 24/7 contact information)
- Improve understanding of the strengths and limitations of existing surveillance systems eg who has access to PulseNet “web board”?
- Improved coordination of controls of food imports



Other issues.....

- Role of syndromic surveillance
- How to improve local investigations?
- Traceability of foods
- Understanding consumer reaction



Tangible next steps.....

- Brainstorm a list

