



## Food & Beverage Committee

Summary of Conference Call Meeting  
March 13, 2017, 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm US ET

### Roll Call

#### Committee Members Present

Chairman, Paul Pederson, Polymer Logistics  
Lyle O'Banion, Kroger  
Susan Atwater, IFCO Systems  
Justin Lehrer, StopWaste  
RPA Staff: Tim Debus  
RPA Staff: Sherrie Terry

#### Committee Members Not Present

Laura Schneider, Black Forest  
John McGill, CHEP  
John McCurdy, Coroplast  
Tom Letizia, Hobart  
Kevin McTavish, Drader  
Bob Klimko, ORBIS  
Bob Albright, Schoeller Allibert  
Joe Laxamana, Sonoco ThermoSafe  
Michelle Fay, StopWaste  
Susan Heil, Tosca

### Agenda Item 1: Project Updates

- A. *APC Correlation Study.* Aerobic Plate Count (APC) is used as an indicator of bacterial populations on a sample. APC is not a measure of the entire bacteria population, and it does not differentiate types of bacteria. With this limitation, it is generally agreed in the scientific community that APC results do not correlate well with the potential for pathogen contamination, and are not useful predictors of product safety. Yet APC data has been used by competitors to cast doubt on the effective cleaning and safety profile of reusable containers in food applications. Therefore, the RPA APC study is intended to evaluate the correlation of APC values with the prevalence of human pathogens known to pose a risk within the North American food supply chain. The goal of this project is to demonstrate the relationship, if any, to known risks to food safety (pathogens). RPA is developing a proposed study design and test protocol based on initial version completed last year. A revised draft will be distributed to the committee for review and discussion.
- B. *Industry Database of Microbial Test Results.* This project is the creation of a single database in which individual members can supply to RPA historical results from microbial testing in their operations. By aggregating data from across multiple sources, larger industry-wide sample sizes can be used to produce generic results for demonstration of product cleanliness and sanitation. Work on the Excel-based database is under development.
- C. *Food Marketing Campaign.* A working group has been established to prepare a consolidation of industry and company data and claims on the benefits of reusable packaging in food applications. Working group members include: Susan Atwater, IFCO; Susan Heil, Tosca; Josh Kling, Polymer Logistics; and Sherrie Terry, RPA. The working group will also draft a request for proposal (RFP) that can be used to engage outside marketing resources in the development of creative campaign materials.

### Agenda Item 2: New Business



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- The effective labeling of transport packaging containers carrying fresh food products is essential for proper identification, handling and regulatory compliance activities. For reusable plastic containers (RPCs), it is also critical that labels and their adhesive residues can be removed completely after each use to preserve the condition and cleanliness of the RPC for subsequent uses. Committee Chairman Paul Pederson will shed some light on this topic and discuss current recommended guidelines labels and adhesive materials at the RPA-hosted Sustainable Solutions Theater at the ProMat show on April 5.
- For the related interest of the committee, the RPA Operations & Logistics Committee is working on a project to evaluate the recovery process of reusable packaging that has been donated to food bank networks. Updates on this project will be provided to the committee.

The Food & Beverage Committee meeting on March 13 was adjourned until the next recurring monthly conference call scheduled for April 10.