



Food & Beverage Committee

Summary of Conference Call Meeting
June 12, 2017, 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm US ET

Roll Call

Committee Members Present

Tom Letizia, Hobart
Bob Klimko, ORBIS
Jerry Koefeld, Polymer Solutions
Justin Lehrer, StopWaste
Susan Heil, Tosca
RPA Staff: Tim Debus
RPA Staff: Sherrie Terry

Committee Members Not Present

Chairman, Paul Pederson, Polymer Logistics
Laura Schneider, Black Forest Containers
John McGill, CHEP
Kevin McTavish, Drader
Lyle O'Banion, Kroger
Jeff Mitchell, IFCO Systems
Bob Albright, Schoeller Allibert
Joe Laxamana, Sonoco ThermoSafe
Michelle Fay, StopWaste

Agenda Item 1: Project Updates

- A. *APC Correlation Study.* Tim Debus reported information from committee chairman Paul Pederson about discussions with universities and independent laboratories on the conduct of the proposed APC Correlation Study. The solicitation of universities to perform the research has been met with delayed responses and challenges related to grant funding and available graduate students, especially entering the summer season. Chairman Pederson has been working with third-party laboratory [Food Safety Net Services](#) (FSNS) in developing a project plan and cost estimate. Initial quotation by FSNS for a comprehensive study involving 1,000 RPC samples testing for bacteria load via Aerobic Plate Count and six specific pathogen species (i.e. E.Coli, Enterobacteriaceae, Listeria, Salmonella) was pricing at \$94,000 and well above RPA funding capabilities. Discussions are underway to scale back the study scope in sampling and testing in order to reduce the costs while still provide meaningful and representative data for use.
- B. *Industry Database of Microbial Test Results.* The establishment of a central database managed by RPA and populated with real-world microbiological test results on a recurring basis is a secondary option to the conduct of an industry study. Many issues would need to be discussed and addressed before such a database could be developed and used effectively by RPA and its members, such as contributing parties, common conditions for testing, confidentiality, access, actions triggered by certain results, etc. Work is ongoing to develop this concept for further consideration by the committee.
- C. *Food Marketing Campaign.* With the completed positioning statement and RFP document, the process is underway to contact and engage with creative ad agencies in the selection process. Agencies will be asked to submit a proposal on a recommended plan to partner with RPA in the development and execution of a marketing campaign to promote reusable packaging in perishable food applications, working within budget and timeline parameters established by RPA.

Agenda Item 2: New Business



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- Following Chairman Pederson's presentation at the ProMat show, April 5, in the RPA-hosted Sustainable Solutions Theater, on recommendations for an industry standard for the labeling of reusable plastic containers (RPCs), a new project is under consideration. Background work with interested RPA members will begin to determine desired and appropriate industry action for a common labeling guideline.
- Justin Lehrer with StopWaste has been working on guidance documents for the cleaning and handling of RPCs and on the loss prevention of reusable assets in small-scale distribution. RPA offered comments on both to reflect recommended practices.
- On a related food topic, the RPA Operations & Logistics Committee held a meeting with Feeding Texas on May 31 to discuss a project to improve the donation of food in reusable packaging and the recovery of the reusable assets. The O&L Committee will first research current food bank processes and identify areas of opportunity for best practices.

The Food & Beverage Committee meeting on June 12 was adjourned until the next recurring monthly conference call scheduled for July 10 [post-meeting note: the July 10 conference call was canceled; the next call scheduled is August 14.]