

## What has the RFA done for you lately?

The RFA strives to provide you, the members, with access to the most up-to-date news and resources on all food safety and regulatory issues affecting the refrigerated foods industry. Our goal is to be your best resources for news, research and answers on technical and regulatory issues facing your business.

The driving force behind the RFA's technical programs and resources is the RFA Technical Committee, which is led by Technical Director Martin Mitchell and Committee Chairman Bill Schwartz of Orval Kent, who took over from Steve Loehndorf in March. In the past year, the Technical Committee has worked to enhance the RFA's technical offerings by completing a valuable new technical project, increasing technical news updates, hosting educational quarterly web conferences, and organizing the technical portion of the RFA's Fall Symposium and Tour.

To keep you up-to-date on everything that is new and available and to make sure you are taking advantage of all the technical resources of the RFA, the Technical Committee has put together the following update on the current services and resources available to RFA members as well as a brief preview of the new projects planned for this year.

Detailed information on all of the RFA's technical resources is always available on the RFA Website. In addition, many of the materials are available to download directly from the website in the Members-Only Section. Visit the RFA website at [www.refrigeratedfoods.org/resources.html](http://www.refrigeratedfoods.org/resources.html). If you have questions, please contact RFA Technical Director Martin Mitchell at [marty@refrigeratedfoods.org](mailto:marty@refrigeratedfoods.org) or you can contact the RFA office at 770-452-0660.

## Get Involved!

The Technical Committee is always looking for input and comments from members on topics and issues they would like to see addressed. If you have input or would like to join the Technical Committee, please contact RFA Technical Director Martin Mitchell at [marty@refrigeratedfoods.org](mailto:marty@refrigeratedfoods.org) or Technical Committee Chair Bill Schwartz at [william.schwartz@orvalkent.com](mailto:william.schwartz@orvalkent.com).



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## Refrigerated Foods Association

# Advancing and Safeguarding



## the Refrigerated Foods Industry



## 2009 Technical Resources Update

# RESEARCH & SUPPORT

The RFA is your resource for information and support on food safety, technical issues and regulatory compliance. A full list of all of the RFA's technical resources is available on the RFA website, under the "Resources" section at [www.refrigeratedfoods.org/resources.html](http://www.refrigeratedfoods.org/resources.html).

## Technical Hotline

Get immediate answers to your technical questions via the Technical Hotline! Members can contact RFA Technical Director Martin Mitchell by phone (800-237-8522) or email ([marty@refrigeratedfoods.org](mailto:marty@refrigeratedfoods.org)) to ask questions on food safety and regulatory issues.

## Technical E-News and E-News Index

Stay up-to-date on the latest food safety and regulatory issues affecting the industry with the Technical E-News, a bimonthly email newsletter containing the latest technical news headlines and articles.

Also available is the Technical E-News Index - an archive of all past Technical E-news articles organized by topic. The E-News Index as well as all current and past issues of the Technical E-News are available to view in the Members-Only Section of the RFA website.

## RFA Listserv

Have a question about plant design? Looking for feedback from other members on a new software program? Get involved in the RFA Listserv, an email discussion group that allows members to send questions or comments to an entire group at one time. Learn more on the RFA website.

## Research Studies and Reports

As a member of the RFA, you have access to in-depth research on the important food safety concerns you face within your plant each day. The RFA has a library of primary research on critical food safety topics, including microbiological control, HACCP, cross-contamination, allergens, and labeling.

# EDUCATION & ADVANCEMENT

The RFA offers valuable web conferences, symposiums and conferences throughout the year that provide information and education on critical food safety issues and allow members to learn and share with others in their field.

## Technical Web Conferences

The RFA Technical Committee hosts four technical web conferences per year on timely, relevant food safety and regulatory topics. Titles from the first three web conferences held this year are listed below. A fourth web conference on the topic of *Trends in Healthy Ingredients* is planned for July 2009. Slide presentations for all past web conferences are available on the RFA website.

- *Best Practices for Good Cold Chain Management* (November 2008) by Elizabeth Darragh of Sensitech
- *Effective Ways to Handle Consumer Complaints* (March 2009) by a panel of speakers from SOCAP International: Cindy Fritton of ConAgra Foods, Elizabeth Tanis of Sara Lee Corporation, and Jack Sullivan of Unilever
- *Effective and Safe Tempering Practices* (May 2009) by Don Schaffner of Rutgers University and Scott Robertson of RMF

## RFA Symposium & Tour

The RFA Technical Committee plans and organizes the Technical track portion of the Fall RFA Symposium. This past year, the RFA Symposium took place in Chicago, and included educational technical sessions along with a visit to The National Center for Food Safety and Technology and a full tour of Sterigenics' Food Irradiation Facility.

This year, the RFA Symposium will be held in September at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. It will feature valuable speaker sessions on important food safety topics as well as interactive tours of the MSU meat lab and dairy plant, a visit to the renowned School of Packaging, and an in-depth tour of Lansing-based Neogen Corporation, where attendees will learn first-hand about the latest developments in rapid testing kits for food safety.

# NEW PROJECTS

The Technical Committee works each year to complete one or more major technical projects. Details of the recently completed project for 2009 and the upcoming 2010 projects are below.

## *What's New:* "RFA Standardized Protocol for Determining Shelf Life of Refrigerated Foods"

The RFA Shelf Life Protocol was updated this year to reflect a number of important regulatory and technological changes that have been adopted in the food industry since its development in 2002, and it now represents the industry's most thorough and objective guide to measuring the shelf life and safety of refrigerated prepared foods. The completed report is available on the RFA website.

## *What's Next:* New Food Safety Training DVD

The Technical Committee has begun work on a new Food Safety Training DVD that will be geared to senior-level employees and supervisors. The DVD will cover HACCP, Personal hygiene, Microorganisms in the plant, Sanitation and Equipment cleanliness, Building maintenance, Allergen control, Food defense, Audit preparation, and Traceability. It will again include both English and Spanish versions and will contain materials for follow-up testing. The new RFA Food Safety Training DVD is scheduled to be completed by the 30th Annual RFA Conference in San Francisco next March.

## Clarification on USDA/FSIS Inspections

The Technical Committee is planning to work with Washington council to get a clear-cut definition as to what members' rights are under USDA and FDA inspection. The goal of this project is to provide members with definitive documentation showing what FSIS/USDA inspectors are allowed to ask for during inspections.