

# THE BELL RINGER

The Newsletter of the Philadelphia Conference of the Central Atlantic States  
Association of Food and Drug Officials

Winter 2014



## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The holiday season has arrived and it's time to reflect on what we are thankful for and what we look forward to next year. I don't make New Year resolutions since they are most likely the same or similar to those from last year; if I could only remember them, but that goes with getting older.

I do want to look back at this year and express my thanks to a hard working and dedicated Philadelphia Conference Executive Board and its members past and current who have worked beyond their occupational duties to participate and provide us with excellent programs. We have a lot to accomplish next year as we prepare to host the centennial year of CASA in 2016. This will again require our membership to assist and make sacrifices to make this a successful venture.

The next meeting which is our annual holiday gathering again shows the quality of our seminars and presents the opportunity to share time and network with our fellow members. Please make every effort to attend.

I would also like to use this message to pay respects to a dear friend and colleague who lived and breathed CASA. That person was Ken Hohe who passed away recently after a brave fight with pancreatic cancer. I had the blessing of spending some time with him at this year's CASA Educational and Training Seminar in Grantville. We reminisced about things in general and how CASA brought so many of us together and how you would always see him and his gracious wife Mary at the meetings. Jack Welte and I went to his Celebration of Life in Harrisburg and saw the impact this gentleman made on so many. I will miss

the chorus of "Ho" that followed his introduction as a past president and CASA award winner.

So let me conclude by wishing all of you and your families, "a happy, healthy and joyous holiday season." I know I am thankful for every chance that I have to see all of you and for all CASA has given to me.

Sincerely,

Howard Rabinovitch  
President  
Philadelphia Conference of CASA



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Conference News & Updates

The Fall CASA meeting was held at the Procacci Brothers training facility in south Philadelphia.

A special election was held to fill the vacant Vice President position so the new updated board includes:

Philadelphia Conference of CASA Officers

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|--|--------------------------|
| Howard Rabinovitch, Retired, FDA                   | President                |
| Hollie Madamba, Atlantic County Health Department  | Vice President           |
| Dennis Bauer, Bucks County Health Department       | Executive Officer        |
| Megan Lauff, U.S. Food & Drug Administration       | Treasurer                |
| Harry Pfender, Bucks County Health Department      | Secretary                |
| Pam Lawn, Montgomery County Health Department      | Member-At-Large          |
| Nancy Wilson, Wawa, Inc.                           | Member-At-Large          |
| Danielle Bytheway, NJ Department of Health         | CASA Representative      |
| Jack Welte, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture | Past President           |
| Caroline Friel, Wawa, Inc.                         | Associate Representative |

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The Fall CASA training meeting had a number of morning presentations providing important regulatory updates that included presentations from

**Barbara Kitay**, Regional Retail Food Specialist, Food & Drug Administration, provided updates on the results of the latest FDA Baseline Study of Risk Factors. Note: CDC identified risk factors that contribute to foodborne illnesses.

**Melissa Vaccarro**, Food Sanitarian Program Specialist, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, provided an update on how the newest PA Food Code will impact the regulation of retail food facilities.

**Yvette Kachadourian**, Epidemiologist, Philadelphia Department of Health provided the group with an update on the activities and status of the Philadelphia Food Safety Task Force.

**The afternoon training sessions offer a different perspective on regulatory and inspection activities.**

**James Metzinger**, Active Shooter Program Coordination, Joint Terrorism Task Force/Federal Bureau of Investigation, provided an overview and practical behaviors to keep yourself aware and safe in situations and while engaged in activities that can lead to personal safety risk .

**Susan Algeo**, Vice President of Training, Paster Training, Inc., ended the day with a presentation that focused on consumer views and assessment of food establishment regulation and inspections.

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As we prepare for Holiday shopping and perhaps more eating out than usual the FDA is ready to lend us a helping hand with our food choices.

**FDA Issues Final Menu and Vending Machine Labeling Requirements**

**Constituent Update**

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**November 25, 2014**

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has finalized two rules requiring that calorie information be listed on menus and menu boards in chain restaurants and similar retail food establishments and vending machines to help consumers make informed decisions about meals and snacks.

The menu labeling final rule applies to restaurants and similar retail food establishments if they are part of a chain of 20 or more locations, doing business under the same name, and offering for sale substantially the same menu items. A restaurant or similar retail food establishment is generally defined as a retail establishment that offers for sale restaurant-type food, which is generally defined as food that is usually eaten on the premises of the establishment, while walking away, or soon after arriving at another location. Examples of restaurants and similar retail food establishments include sit-down and fast-food restaurants, bakeries, coffee shops and grocery and convenience stores. The menu labeling final rule also requires calorie labeling for certain alcoholic beverages and certain foods sold at entertainment venues such as movie theaters and amusement parks. The FDA also clarifies in the menu labeling final rule that certain foods purchased in grocery stores or other retail food establishments that are typically intended for more than one person to eat and require additional preparation before consuming,

such as pounds of deli meats and cheeses and large-size deli salads, are not covered.

To help consumers understand the significance of the calorie information in the context of a total daily diet, the FDA is requiring a succinct statement that says, "2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice, but calorie needs vary" to be included on menus and menu boards. The menu labeling final rule also requires covered establishments to provide, upon consumer request, written nutrition information about total calories, total fat, calories from fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrates, fiber, sugars and protein.

Restaurants and similar retail food establishments that are covered, including those that voluntarily register with FDA to comply with the menu labeling requirements, will have one year from the date of publication of the menu labeling final rule to comply with the requirements.

The vending machine final rule requires operators who own or operate 20 or more vending machines to disclose calorie information for food sold from vending machines, subject to certain exceptions. Vending machine operators that are covered, including those that voluntarily register with FDA to comply with the vending machine labeling requirements, will have two years from the date of publication of the vending machine labeling final rule to comply with the requirements.

For more information:

- [Menu and Vending Machines Labeling Requirements](#)
- Federal Register Notice - [Final Rule: Food Labeling; Nutrition Labeling of Standard Menu Items in Restaurants and Similar Retail Food Establishments](#)
- Federal Register Notice - [Final Rule: Food Labeling; Calorie Labeling of Articles of Food in Vending Machines](#)

Our Winter Holiday meeting topics are included in the copy of the announcement below:

**PHILADELPHIA**  **CONFERENCE**

FOUNDED  AUGUST 3, 1923

OF THE CENTRAL ATLANTIC STATES ASSOCIATION OF FOOD AND DRUG OFFICIALS  
IN ASSOCIATION WITH A.F.D.O.

Friday - December 5, 2014

**FALL EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR**  
NJ CEU's Pending

Trevoze Fire House  
MEI Catering/Twining Hall  
4900 Street Road  
Trevoze, Pa 19053

8:00 – 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 10:30	“The Relationship between the PA Liquor Control Enforcement and the State Health Departments” Fay Algeo, Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board Derick Devaney, Liquor Enforcement Officer Pennsylvania State Police Bureau of Liquor Enforcement
10:30-10:45	Break
10:45:-11:45	“Brewery Sanitation” Dominic Capece, Manager Free Will Brewing, Perkasie, PA
11:45-1:00	LUNCH (Catered by MEI Catering - \$10.00)
1:00 – 2:15	“Juice Production and Juice HACCP” Kristin Collins, Assistant Manager of Quality Assurance Wawa Beverage Company
2:15-2:30	Break
2:30 – 4:00	“Boiled Water Advisory in Montgomery County” Richard Nave & Andrea Sipple/Supervisors Environmental Field Services Montgomery County Health Department

NOTE: Pre-Registration is required no later than close of business, Friday – November 28, 2014.  
Everyone must register with Lynn Bonner at [Lynn.Bonner@fda.hhs.gov](mailto:Lynn.Bonner@fda.hhs.gov) or you may call her at (215) 717-3074.

COST: The following fees apply:

Current 2014 Members – Registration Fee of \$5.00  
Non-members/Delinquent Members–Dues plus Registration Fee of \$5.00  
Dues: Regulator - \$15.00  
Associate - \$35.00  
Academic - \$10.00  
Student - \$10.00  
Retired - \$10.00

CEUs: A New Jersey continuing education credit application will be submitted to NJLMN for this course. The total number of credits approved for this agenda is pending (approx. 4.0 to 5.0 expected). This course will be listed on NJLMN web site upon approval of the credits and you may register for the CEU's at that time ([www.NJLMN.rutgers.edu](http://www.NJLMN.rutgers.edu)).

\*Don't forget to bring items for donation for our quarterly CASA food drive to help the needy. Items needed: juice/drink mixes, tuna, peanut butter & jelly, jello/pudding, hamburger helper, rice, pancake mix & syrup, paper products – toilet paper, paper towels & tissues, condiments – ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, toiletries – soap, toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant\*

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In anticipation of the Juice related presentation the following FDA juice safety articles provide a little background information on relevant juice consumption issues and concerns.



## **FDA: Apple Juice Is Safe to Drink**

Arsenic and apple juice. Not words you like to see in the same sentence.

There has been publicity recently over the amount of arsenic in the apple juice that many children drink.

But the Food and Drug Administration has every confidence in the safety of apple juice.

Donald Zink, Ph.D, senior science advisor at FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), explains that arsenic is present in the environment as a naturally occurring substance or as a result of contamination from human activity. It is found in water, air, food, and soil in organic and inorganic forms.

As a result, small amounts of arsenic can be found in certain food and beverage products—including fruit juices and juice concentrates.

"As a parent and grandparent myself, I understand the concern over recent reports that arsenic has been found in apple juice," says Zink.

But, he says, there is no evidence of any public health risk from drinking these juices, Zink says. And FDA has been testing them for years.

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### **Levels Set for Water**

Why hasn't FDA defined the point at which arsenic levels are unsafe in apple juice when such levels have been established for public drinking water and bottled water?

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set the arsenic standard for public drinking water at 10 parts per billion (ppb) to protect consumers from the effects of long-term exposure to arsenic, which could include skin damage, circulatory problems and an increased risk of cancer.

In concurrence with EPA, FDA has also set the arsenic standard at 10 ppb in bottled water.

So why not set safe levels for arsenic in apple juice?

There is clear evidence that inorganic arsenic is a public health problem in some water supplies, and this is why the EPA has established a drinking water standard. FDA's position is that similar evidence of a risk to public health does not exist for apple juice. Unlike drinking water, the levels routinely found in apple juice are either not detectable or occur at very low levels.

FDA will continue to test juices and juice concentrate and evaluate data provided by industry, consumer groups and government agencies, as well as data published in scientific literature. If the agency finds too much inorganic arsenic in any juice, it will take steps to remove that product from the market, says Zink.

This article appears on [FDA's Consumer Updates page](#)<sup>4</sup>, which features the latest on all FDA-regulated products.

*Posted September 14, 2011*

### **Grapefruit Juice and Medicine May Not Mix**

Grapefruit juice can be part of a healthful diet—most of the time. It has vitamin C and potassium—substances your body needs to work properly.

But it isn't good for you when it affects the way your medicines work.

Grapefruit juice and fresh grapefruit can interfere with the action of some prescription drugs, as well as a few non-prescription drugs.

This interaction can be dangerous, says Shiew Mei Huang, acting director of the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Clinical Pharmacology. With most drugs that interact with grapefruit juice, "the juice increases the absorption of the drug into the bloodstream," she says. "When there is a higher concentration of a drug, you tend to have more adverse events."

For example, if you drink a lot of grapefruit juice while taking certain statin drugs to lower cholesterol, too much of the drug may stay in your body, increasing your risk for liver damage and muscle breakdown that can lead to kidney failure. Drinking grapefruit juice several hours before or several hours after you take your medicine may still be dangerous, says Huang, so it's best to avoid or limit consuming grapefruit juice or fresh grapefruit when taking certain drugs.

Examples of some types of drugs that grapefruit juice can interact with are:

- some statin drugs to lower cholesterol, such as Zocor (simvastatin), Lipitor (atorvastatin) and Pravachol (pravastatin)
- some blood pressure-lowering drugs, such as Nifediac and Afeditab (both nifedipine)
- some organ transplant rejection drugs, such as Sandimmune and Neoral (both cyclosporine)
- some anti-anxiety drugs, such as BuSpar (buspirone)
- some anti-arrhythmia drugs, such as Cordarone and Nexterone (both amiodarone)
- some antihistamines, such as Allegra (fexofenadine)
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Grapefruit juice does not affect all the drugs in the categories above. Ask your pharmacist or other health care professional to find out if your specific drug is affected.

### **Too High or Too Low Drug Levels**

Many drugs are broken down (metabolized) with the help of a vital enzyme called CYP3A4 in the small intestine. Certain substances in grapefruit juice block the action of CYP3A4, so instead of being metabolized, more of the drug enters the bloodstream and stays in the body longer. The result: potentially dangerous levels of the drug in your body.

The amount of the CYP3A4 enzyme in the intestine varies from one person to another, says Huang. Some people have a lot, and others have just a little—so grapefruit juice may affect people differently when they take the same drug.

While scientists have known for several decades that grapefruit juice can cause a potentially toxic level of certain drugs in the body, Huang says more recent studies have found that the juice has the opposite effect on a few other drugs.

"Grapefruit juice reduces the absorption of fexofenadine," says Huang, decreasing the effectiveness of the drug. Fexofenadine (brand name Allegra) is available in both prescription and non-prescription forms to relieve symptoms of seasonal allergies. Fexofenadine may also be less effective if taken with orange or apple juice, so the drug label states "do not take with fruit juices."

Why this opposite effect?

It involves the transportation of drugs within the body rather than their metabolism, explains Huang. Proteins in the body known as drug transporters help move a drug into cells for absorption.

Substances in grapefruit juice block the action of a specific group of transporters. As a result, less of the drug is absorbed and it may be ineffective, Huang says.

When a drug sponsor applies to FDA for approval of a drug, the sponsor submits data on how its drug is absorbed, metabolized and transported says Huang. "Then we can decide how to label the drug."

FDA has required some prescription drugs to carry labels that warn against consuming grapefruit juice or fresh grapefruit while using the drug, says Huang. And the agency's current research into drug and grapefruit juice interaction may result in label changes for other drugs as well.

### **Tips for Consumers**

- Ask your pharmacist or other health care professional if you can have fresh grapefruit or grapefruit juice while using your medication. If you can't, you may want to ask if you can have other juices with the medicine.
- Read the Medication Guide or patient information sheet that comes with your prescription medicine to find out if it could interact with grapefruit juice. Some may advise not to take the drug with grapefruit juice. If it's OK to have grapefruit juice, there will be no mention of it in the guide or information sheet.
- Read the Drug Facts label on your non-prescription medicine, which will let you know if you shouldn't have grapefruit or other fruit juices with it.
- If you must avoid grapefruit juice with your medicine, check the label of bottles of fruit juice or drinks flavored with fruit juice to make sure they don't contain grapefruit juice.
- Seville oranges (often used to make orange marmalade) and tangelos (a cross between tangerines and grapefruit) affect the same enzyme as grapefruit juice, so avoid these fruits as well if your medicine interacts with grapefruit juice.

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### **SAVE THE DATE:**

**April 20-23, 2015, Virginia Beach, VA**

**2015 CASA Annual Education and Training Seminar**

**March 2015 - Don't miss our next meeting!!!**

**Editor's Note:** Share your interests, information and announcements with your fellow professionals. If you take great notes contribute to the Bell Ringer and recount your training or meeting adventures. Please email to:

[George.Zameska@pastertraining.com](mailto:George.Zameska@pastertraining.com). Space is available for advertising in the Bell Ringer.

I look forward to your feedback and participation.