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## Executive Board Report

Happy summer. In July, I was at the summer Board meeting in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania where we picked the topics for the 100<sup>th</sup> Year Annual Educational and Training Seminar which will be held at the Radisson Hotel in King of Prussian, April 25-28, 2016. The agenda is set and we look forward to presentations on FSMA transportation rule, emergency response and preparedness, pest control, cured meats, ethnic foods, Listeria remediation, the retail standards program with FDA, and many more. If you think that you may be attending, keep an eye out for reservation information as the hotel last year booked up quickly and government rate was not available to everyone.

A change in the refund policy will take affect this year, so if you are unsure if you will be able to attend or not, please wait for approval before you register. If you are awaiting approval and it is getting close to the conference, please let me know and I can contact the treasurer on your behalf. We anticipate grant funds from the FDA again this year, watch for the email announcement to apply for scholarships.

After that, it's our turn to show everyone what we can do for a conference as we will host in 2017. I will soon be working with the planner to establish a location. More details to come...

We are holding steady with our membership numbers with the past few years, but I'd love to see an increase. Invite your co-workers to join us this year.

I'd also like to mention that the 2015 speaker presentations have been posted on the website, if you were unable to attend and would like to take a look.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you at our meeting on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

Erin Sawyer

NENY Executive Board Representative

## Quarterly Meeting Training Announcement

Save the Date! Our next meeting is scheduled to be held on Friday September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015 from 9:30 am—2:30 pm at the NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets, 10B Air-line Dr, Albany, NY. There will be speaker presentations from representatives of the NY State Liquor Authority and the USDA. Lunch will be provided. To register for this training seminar, please send a check for \$12.00 NENY CASA Members or \$15.00 Non-members and \$10.00 academia made payable to: Marianne Stone, Albany County Department of Health, 175 Green Street Albany, NY 12202. We hope to see you there!

## 2015-2016

### Officers

President - Nichola Miller

Albany County Health Department

Vice President - Marcia Galka

Schenectady County Health Department

Secretary-Treasurer - Marianne Stone

Albany County Health Department

Executive Board Rep. - Erin Sawyer

NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets

### Executive Board Members

Tara Becker

Columbia County Health Department

Sharon Pretel

NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets

Dominick DiCarlo

Schenectady County Health Department

Erin Lockhart

NYS Dept. of Agriculture and Markets

## Study Explores Effect of Spinach Leaf Shape on Efficacy of Rinsing

A team of researchers at the University of California-Riverside completed a study which tested different wash conditions on spinach leaves contaminated with *E. coli*. The group, led by professor of chemical and environmental engineering Sharon Walker, had previously done research on the ways bacteria stick to different surfaces and applied their findings to water treatment and the making of antimicrobial surfaces. When post-doctoral researcher Nichola Kinsinger joined the group with a fellowship from the USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture, they decided to try looking at food surfaces for the first time. Spinach was chosen in part due to the 2006 outbreak of *E. coli* linked to spinach produced in California. The outbreak included 199 illnesses in 26 states, and 3 fatalities.

The team found that the shape of the spinach leaves, with its various recesses, keeps out the disinfectant at concentrations typically used by the food industry (50-200 ppm chlorine). After rinsing, the group found that live bacteria could still be present on the leaves.



The research was presented on August 19, 2015 at the American Chemical Society National Meeting and Exposition, and the group is in the process of authoring a paper on their work. While Kinsinger will be leaving the lab in a month, Walker says the group intends to continue to work on improving spinach safety. "There are lots of things on the table. We can think about the chemistry of what's in the rinse water, we can think about the physics and flow dynamics of the rinse water, and we can think about ways to disinfect that are not chemically based," says Walker.

<http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2015/08/research-pre-washed-spinach-may-not-be-as-clean-as-you-think/#.VdzBFE3bJ9A>

### Did You Know?

The *Listeria* Whole Genome Sequencing (WGS) Project was started by CDC, federal partners and state and local health departments in 2013 to link WGS and epidemiologic data to better detect and investigate listeriosis outbreaks. The project utilizes the GenomeTrakr, the first nationally distributed networks of labs using whole genome sequencing for pathogen identification.  
[www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)

### Membership Dues

If you have not already paid your annual dues, please forward payment as soon as possible to Marianne Stone, Albany County Health Department PO Box 678, Albany NY or you can pay at our next quarterly meeting. Payment can also be forwarded to Central Atlantic

States Association of Food and Drug Officials, 200 Chestnut Street, Room 900, Philadelphia, PA 19106-2973. Annual dues are: \$15.00 for Regulatory members; \$35.00 for Associate members; and \$10.00 for Retirees and Academic memberships.



### CASA Website

The CASA organization has a newly designed website that has up to date information on all conference information, meetings, events, newsletters etc. All membership renewals and news updates will be sent via email. If you have not already done so, please register your email address so that you do not miss out on current information at: [www.casafdo.org](http://www.casafdo.org). CASA also has a Facebook page that can be linked to through the CASA website, so be sure to "like" us on Facebook!



## Proposed Changes to CASA Executive Board

The CASA Executive Board is currently considering possible changes to the terms of members who serve on the Board and the progression of their tenure as officers of the organization. There are two possible tracks for consideration:

| Track A               | Track B                            |                                |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Year 1 - Board Member | Year 1 - Board Member              | Year 5 - President (Auto)      |
| Year 2 – Board Member | Year 2 – Board Member              | Year 6 – Past President (Auto) |
| Year 3 - Board Member | Year 3 - Jr. Vice President (Auto) |                                |
| Year 4 – Board Member | Year 4 – Vice President (Auto)     |                                |

### Pros

- ⇒ Would allow the board and CASA members to easily create and/or dissolve food conferences according to Article V Numbers 10, 11 of the By-Laws without affecting the rotation of the conference officers or extending time served on the board.
- ⇒ The board could decide on anywhere to hold the annual ETS without affecting the rotation of the conference officers or extending time served on the board.
- ⇒ Easier planning if the same hotels are used more frequently with the possibility of more incentives and concessions offered.
- ⇒ Eliminates 3 years of time on the Executive Board based on the current 8 year model.
- ⇒ Allows more CASA members to participate and rotate through the Executive Board.
- ⇒ Could possibly add DE, WV, OH and DC into the mix and create local conferences there based on interest or hold the annual ETS there to increase our reach.
- ⇒ Loss of an officer midway through their rotation would not be as detrimental as is currently.
- ⇒ Greater flexibility and delegation of responsibility.
- ⇒ You can still serve on the board without being an officer if you do not like public speaking.

### Cons

- ⇒ Policy and Procedure manual and also the Constitution and By-Laws would need to be updated. Changes need to be submitted by February 1, 2016 with membership vote at the 100<sup>th</sup> Annual ETS in May 2016.
- ⇒ The President may not necessarily serve from the local conference holding the ETS. Other associations are setup similar for instance AFDO and AFDOSS. The local arrangements committee would need to be strong with help from the Executive Board.
- ⇒ Duties on the Executive Board would need to be condensed or assigned. Could allow for individuals with strong points and weak points to choose responsibilities.
- ⇒ Possibility of nobody wanting to move into officer track B.
- ⇒ Not enough time to learn CASA business before moving into track B.
- ⇒ Historically this is not how we have operated.
- ⇒ Initiation of this model would take possibly 2-3 years to be fully incorporated.
- ⇒ Smaller conferences may go by the wayside if ETS never comes around.
- ⇒ Rotation of the ETS may get stagnant.

# Way Out Weird Foods!

Hello Everyone! Our first Installment of Weird Foods is on The Ortolan Bunting, a dish hailing from classic Southwestern French cuisine that is currently only available if one is willing to commit a crime, as the killing and selling of these tiny songbirds has been illegal in France since the late 1990's, though not strictly enforced until 2007. This ban was not only instituted to protect the population of the bird, but because many find the method in which the bird is killed and served to be barbaric and cruel.

The classic preparation of an Ortolan starts with catching one in the wild. The small-less than one ounce in weight- brown buntings are caught with nets or cages during their seasonal migratory flight to Africa. After capture, the birds are kept (literally) in the dark in covered cages (called matoles), so that, to them, it is perpetually night. This forced darkness cause the bird to gorge itself, typically on millet, inside the cage and double in body weight in a short time- the covered cages are usually left to hold the birds for about a month. It is even said that Roman Emperors would actually gouge the birds' eyes out to achieve this forced feeding. After the birds have been sufficiently fattened up, they are killed by drowning the bird in Armagnac, a high quality regional French brandy. This prevents any physical damage to the flesh of the bird and causes the lungs and stomach to be filled with the distinctive brandy. After it has been drowned (and subsequently marinated), the birds are plucked, and then roasted for 7-8 minutes. Traditionally the Ortolan is gently roasted either in a small pot or in an eggshell.



The Ortolan, once cooked, is served immediately from the oven. The bird is then eaten whole (bones, gizzard, and all) by placing all but the head and beak into the mouth and biting down. Some gastronomers eat the head as well. Supposedly the burst of brandy from the filled lungs and stomach is part of the delicacy, as well as the relatively large amount of fat that slides down the throat while sucking in air to cool the mouth (the birds are served

piping hot). The traditional way to perform this eating ritual is to place a cloth napkin completely over one's head when consuming, which is believed to perform two functions: first, to hold in the aroma of the bird, and second to hide one's gluttony from the eyes of God.

Much as chefs in the US fought to get Foie Gras (the fatty liver of a force fed duck or goose) returned to menus after it was banned in California and cities in other states, there are a group of French chefs fighting to have the ban on the hunting and cooking of Ortolan buntings lifted or eased. Their claim is that the ban "undermines centuries of tradition, customs, and promotes a black market with exorbitant prices". In the meantime, the practice of catching, drowning, roasting, and eating these whole tiny songbirds remains a black market affair. ~ Erin Lockhart



*Guests eating ortolan at a private dinner party in southwestern France after the bird was banned from restaurant menus. Credit Richard Cotterier/MAXPPP*

Sources:

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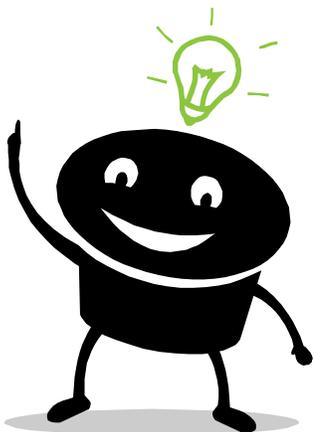
## Personnel Changes

Donna Dicesare, who has overseen the pet food and animal feed program for the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, has decided that after 35 years of State service, she's ready to retire. She started her state career with the NYS Department of Parks and Recreation as a park attendant in the Saratoga Spa State Park. After leaving Parks and Recreation, she came to the Department of Agriculture and Markets, where she held various clerk positions in the Division of Food Safety. She was promoted to Account Clerk in Ag and Market's Finance office and then returned to Food Safety to accept a Grade 9 clerk position. While in the Division, Donna was promoted to Administrative Assistant/ Program Manager of the commercial feed program. She has held this position since January 2004. Donna has been a great asset to both Food Safety and to CASA. While she will be missed, we all wish her the best for a long and happy retirement.



## Associate Member Sought for NENY CASA E-Board

The NENY CASA Executive Board would like to include an Associate member from Industry on the Executive Board. If you or any of your colleagues may be interested, please contact one of the Board members listed on the newsletter cover page.



### Tell us your ideas!

If you have any ideas or topics that you would like to hear about or suggestions for speakers, please let one of our officers or e-board members know. As always, all ideas are appreciated.