



RECOMMENDATION #2 – Support the establishment of a “National Food Safety Training Center” to assure inspection equivalence among all inspection entities.

While state and local agencies perform approximately 80% of all food safety inspections and nearly all of the confirmed and non-confirmed foodborne illness investigations in this country, this work is oftentimes not utilized by federal agencies. A “Resource Survey” conducted by AFDO in 2001 revealed that state and local food protection programs will test approximately 328,000 food samples annually. This work is also generally ignored by federal agencies.

While there may be certain legal reasons for this, there is also the issue of demonstrating testing equivalence and adequacy of inspection by state and local agencies. To resolve this matter, AFDO believes there is a critical need for all to share in the development of a food safety training center that will serve as a central point for core and career training programs for government inspectors, 3rd party food safety auditors, and foreign entities.

AFDO believes there are a number of key strategies that must be undertaken to fully utilize all available food protection resources. At the core of the strategy to leverage these resources is the creation of a center that focuses on training of regulatory officials. The advancement of highly trained professionals is critical to the acceptance and improvement of the bulk of the food safety work performed in this country. It will assure equivalency, but more importantly, will have a dramatic impact on the health of the public.

AFDO is attempting to build an alliance among federal agencies, associations which represent government regulators, and interested industry trade associations to promote this idea and seek their full support. Training, in our view, will be the foundation for building an integrated food safety system in this country.