# PFP IT WG NEWSLETTER

PARTNERSHIP FOR FOOD PROTECTION INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY WORKGROUP

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### Featured Articles



### Highlights




## Coffee Talk with Phillip Fruechting

The FDA Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA) Data Exchange (DX) team recently had the pleasure of catching up with Phillip Fruechting, PFP IT WG Co-chair and Public Health Section Chief II, Arkansas Department of Health for a Coffee Talk. Arkansas was one of the first states to come on board with the DX and Phillip has been a part of the PFP IT WG since the initial development of the ORA DX. Enjoy reading about Phillip's job role and interesting perspective of the ORA DX program *on page 5*. The Coffee Talk article is also available on the *PFP site*.

## Info About AAFCO

The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) is a voluntary membership association of local, state, and federal agencies. AAFCO members are charged by their local, state, or federal laws to regulate the sale and distribution of animal feeds and animal drug remedies.

The mission of AFFCO is a collaborative association that supports members and stakeholders and promotes a safe feed supply through unified system-based regulation, feed ingredient standards, and laboratory operations.

AAFCO is grateful to be part of PFP and believes PFP support and resources help their members take program to next level.

For more information, visit *AAFCO*

FDA

AAFCO Association of American Feed Control Officials

*"We shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it." - Abraham Lincoln*

# Meet Your PFP Governing Council IT Representatives

## Hollis Glenn
## Division Director, Colorado Department of Agriculture

Hollis Glenn is the Director of the Inspection and Consumer Services Division for the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA). Hollis oversees several regulatory programs associated with Colorado's agricultural industries, including the Commercial Feed and Produce Safety Programs. Hollis serves on the AAFCO Board of Directors and is on the PFP Governing Council. In addition, Hollis was appointed by Governor Polis to serve on the Colorado Food System Advisory Council and was the recipient of the "Who's Who in Agriculture" award in 2020.

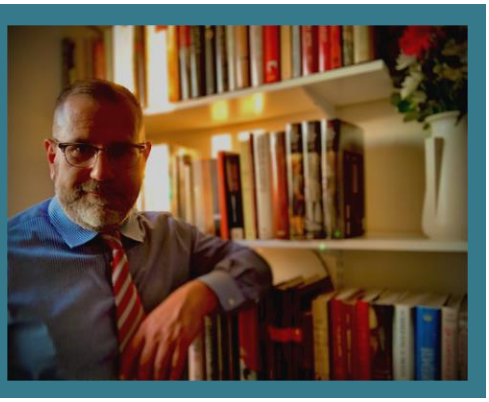
### More about Hollis

As a Director, Hollis focuses on implementing meaningful process improvements to the CDA programs. Over the last two years, the CDA implemented the Animal Feed Regulatory Program Standards and adopted the Produce Safety Rule. The CDA is currently working to interface with the ORA DX via the Laboratory Flexible Funding Model (LFFM) project. For Hollis, these improvements are critical for Colorado to align successfully with the Integrated Food Safety System (IFSS) vision. Hollis has represented both state agencies and feed programs on the PFP Governing Council since 2020.

Hollis serves on the Governing Council for Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO)'s System for Agriculture, Food, Health, E-Inspections, and Registration (SAFHER) project, which is focused on procuring a modern licensing and inspection software platform that all state regulatory programs can use. Hollis believes the SAFHER system is an important piece in helping states integrate regulatory information with the ORA DX, which will lead to faster responses to outbreaks and in identifying trends in food safety.

Hollis lives with his wife and two children in Golden, Colorado. As a Colorado native, Hollis is a hardcore mountain climber and has reached the summit of 42 mountains over 14,000 ft. above sea level. Last summer, Hollis was proud to see his children, Estelle and Harrison, on top of their first mountain summit. (Picture: On top of Mt. Sherman, 14,036 ft.)

## Pieter Sheehan, Director of Environmental Health
## Fairfax County, Health Department in Fairfax, Virginia



Pieter Sheehan is the Director of Environmental Health with the Fairfax County, Health Department in Fairfax, Virginia. Since 2012, Pieter has overseen the regulatory and outreach activities including food safety, body art, childcare, climate initiatives, drinking water, lodging, onsite sewage, public health nuisance, recreational aquatic, indoor air, and vector surveillance/control. Prior to Fairfax County, Pieter was with St. Charles County Department of Public Health; St. Louis County Health Department both in Missouri; County of Monterey Health Department in Salinas, California; and Maricopa County Environmental Services Department in Phoenix, Arizona.

### More about Pieter

Pieter got involved with the PFP in 2008 at the 50-State Workshop in St. Louis, Missouri. At that time, there were four workgroups: Recalls, Outbreak Investigations, Risk-Based Inspections and Sampling, and Roles and Responsibilities. Pieter has tried to keep local perspectives relevant as the PFP continued to grow. Pieter has been on the Governing Council for the last couple of years.

Pieter co-founded the *Washington Scandals Rugby Football Club*. The Scandals RFC was originally founded in the Spring of 2013 to foster community and athleticism for gay men in the DC metropolitan area. The organization currently works to promote diversity and an inclusive environment for all athletes regardless of sexual orientation, race, age, religion, or fitness level through learning and playing the dynamic sport of rugby.

***"You CAN make an omelette without breaking eggs. It's just a really bad omelette." - Steven Colbert***

## What You Need to Know About Egg Safety

Fresh eggs, even those with clean, uncracked shells, may contain a type of bacteria called *Salmonella* that can cause foodborne illness, often called "food poisoning." FDA has put regulations in place to help prevent contamination of eggs on the farm, during shipping, and storage. FDA requires all cartons of shell eggs that have not been treated to destroy *Salmonella* to carry a safe handling statement.

Consumers also play a key role in preventing illness linked to eggs by following safe handling tips when buying, storing, preparing, and serving eggs–or foods that contain them.

*For More Information About What You Need to Know About Egg Safety | FDA*

## FDA Establishment Identifier (FEI) Number And Portal

### What is an FEI?

An FDA Establishment Identifier or Firm Establishment Identifier (FEI) is an FDA system generated number used to identify a firm. FDA systems interact, occasionally creating multiple records (FEIs) for one firm. Upon evaluation, these numbers are merged into one surviving FEI that is used to identify the firm. The remaining FEIs become children of the surviving FEI and are not used to identify the firm.

### What is the FEI Portal for?

The FEI portal was developed to help firms identify FEIs associated with a specific address. Having the correct and current FEI for a firm ensures database look-ups or inquires can be conducted as quickly as possible.

### How do I use the FEI Portal?

After logging into the portal using an email address and password, users can search for the FEI or name and physical address of a firm. When searching a firm name and physical address, the FEI search will be grayed out and not be able to be used. If there is a result returned from the search it will display the firm's FEI, name, physical address, and mailing address.

**For more information see** *FEI Frequently Asked Questions*

## Information Corner

Contact us at APPSDesk@fda.hhs.gov

### ORAL HEALTH

Your oral health is more important than you might realize. Learn how the health of your mouth, teeth, and gums can affect your general health.

Did you know that your oral health offers clues about your overall health – or that problems in your mouth can affect the rest of your body? Protect yourself by learning more about the connection between your oral health and overall health. *Oral health: A window to your overall health - Mayo Clinic*

### WHAT IS *SALMONELLA*?

*Salmonella* are a group of bacteria that can cause a gastrointestinal illness and fever, which is called salmonellosis. *Salmonella* can be spread by food handlers who do not wash their hands and/or the surfaces and tools they use between food preparation steps, and when people eat raw or undercooked foods. *Salmonella* can also spread from animals to people.

*Salmonella (Salmonellosis) | FDA*

### EGG REGULATORY PROGRAM STANDARDS

In January 2022 U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the National Egg Regulatory Officials (NERO) announced a new program for state egg and egg product regulators, the Egg Regulatory Program Standards (ERPS). The ERPS defines a set of best practices for a regulatory system and a tool to continuously improve and promote the development of a high-quality state egg regulatory program. The ERPS establishes a uniform foundation for regulatory agencies responsible for oversight of eggs and egg products. *Read more...*

***"The egg can be your best friend if you just give it the right break."* - Julia Child**

# ORA DX Participation Overview

2018-2019, the ORA DX successfully onboarded three states; Arkansas, Florida, and Illinois for System-to-System Services and has since expanded to include additional partners. Currently, forty-eight states are participating in at least one of the ORA DX capabilities. In certain cases, we have more than one partner/agency per state participating. Since the release of the ORA Partners Portal (ORAPP) in 2019, the ORA DX experienced a surge in participation with more than 40 new state agencies or state programs onboarding the ORA DX.

Participating in PFP IT WG or Sample WG

**47 TOTAL**

Participating in Partners Portal*

**61 TOTAL**

Participating in System-to-System**

**24 TOTAL**

## REGULATORY PARTNER PARTICIPATION


*In certain cases, there is more than 1 partner/agency per state
**Some partners are in the process of onboarding; including enhanced DX client participants

**Omari Fennell, DX Outreach Coordinator,**
**ORA Office of Information Systems and Management, Food and Drug Administration**

*Hello States!*

*Going along with the theme of this newsletter, I like the quote, "an egg in the nest doesn't become a bird overnight." With every new partner, enhancement and capability, the ORA DX is preparing to soar.*

*This past year, we focused on the inspection and sample data sharing capabilities. Now, there is support for additional sample analysis types, submission of Intentional Adulteration data, plus the ability to update and retrieve Firm point of contact information. In 2022, we have already introduced the Firm Inventory Reconciliation capability and enhanced Firm Search and History, with more to come!*

*I enjoyed attending the virtual Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Alliance (MFRPA) meeting in Feb. 2022 and the PFP National Workshop meeting in March 2022. I hope to meet with you in person again in the future. It is always a pleasure working with you to assist with ORA DX activities. Thank you for your continued support of the ORA DX. If you have any questions, contact us at: AppsDesk@fda.hhs.gov*

*– **Omari Fennell**, DX Outreach Coordinator*

***"Gentleness doesn't get work done unless you happen to be a hen laying eggs." - Coco Chanel***


# Coffee Talk with Phillip Fruechting

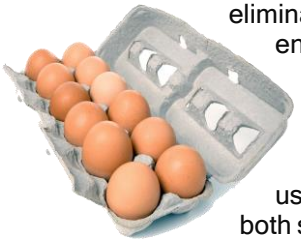
**Public Health Section Chief II**
Wholesale/Manufacturing Foods
Arkansas Department of Health (ADH)

*Continued from page 1.*

## Hello Phillip! Tell us about yourself and your role on the ORA DX project.

I began my regulatory career conducting retail food inspections as a Registered Sanitarian for the City of Dallas, Texas. After leaving Dallas, I worked as a Registered Sanitarian inspecting food service establishments and swimming pools for the City of McKinney, Texas. In 2015, our food programs began conducting regulatory inspections using the electronic system USAFoodSafety. I was invited to become a member of the PFP IT WG in August of 2015.

## In your role as Co-Chair of the PFP IT WG and a DX participant, what do you think are some of the benefits or advantages of participating in the ORA DX, that you would like to share with the states you support?



A benefit of participating in the ORA DX is that it will eliminate the need for states to log-in and enter firm/inspectional data on two systems, FDA system and state system. Data sharing can be completed through the state system that the state inspector uses on a daily basis. Also, it helps both state and FDA programs, by having the ability to submit and review inspectional data in real time.

## In 2017, Arkansas was one of the first states to come on board with the DX. What lessons learned would you like to share from your many years of experience with the ORA DX?

I would encourage any state thinking about participating in the ORA DX to work with the FDA to implement data sharing if it is possible to do so. The state's program management should be prepared and get permission from their management and information technology (IT). Agreements will be required from the FDA before a state can participate in the ORA DX. Successful implementation is a process that will take time and resources. States need to budget and plan for any costs that may be associated with IT implementation and support.

## Currently, Arkansas is on board for System-to-System (aka NFSDX) capabilities such as Firm Search, State-to-State, and the Partners Portal capabilities such as Firm Search and Firm History, and planning to use System-to-System Contracted Inspection soon. Would you share with us the Arkansas Department of Health's experience using these capabilities?

Overall, it has been a good experience. This would not have been accomplished without the cooperation of our various partners. We have had great support from FDA's ORA DX teams, the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), our USAFoodSafety vendor, and other state programs.

## Looking ahead, are there any capabilities or enhancements you would like to see within the ORA DX?

I know FDA is working on expanding shared data sets with regulatory partners including inventory reconciliation between FDA and regulatory partners. Currently, nothing comes to mind. I just look forward to seeing the new features as they become available to states.

***Note: The Inventory Reconciliation capability was released in January 2022.***

## How can states and the ORA DX continue to work together to ensure successful data sharing?

A state needs to be able to demonstrate to the public that the time and resources invested were worth the effort. The processes and systems need to be easy to use and enhance productivity for all parties at the same time, keeping data and systems secured. I think Jennifer Pierquet (AFDO) has a good idea regarding creating specific user groups for the states that have experience with the DX.

I think this would help to maintain and advance system performance down the road.

I encourage states to reach out to the FDA if they would like to see specific system improvements. I recommend taking advantage of opportunities for staff to get involved in any user or working groups related to ORA DX. When I first joined the PFP IT WG, I think there were five states in the group. Now many states are participating in ORA DX via the Partners Portal, System-to-System or PFP IT or Sample WG. *Read more...*

*"Remember, people will judge you by your actions not your intentions. You may have a heart of gold but so does a hard-boiled egg." - Maya Angelou*

# ORA DX Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Question: Does the FDA provide the data exchange specifics and file formats to regulatory partners?**

**Answer:** Yes. The FDA provides the data fields, formats (XML schema definitions), message constructs, etc., necessary to exchange data using the System-to-System. For the Partners Portal, the FDA provides predefined Excel templates with data fields, data requirements, mapping information to map state data fields to FDA data fields, and instructions to upload the files.

## Resources and Useful Information

- PFP Website and Twitter
- PFP IT WG Page
- ORA Partners Portal Homepage
- AFDO Newsletters
- Presentations at MFRPA Conferences
- Contact Us at AppsDesk@fda.hhs.gov

**Question: What types of technical components are used in the System-to-System?**

Answer: The System-to System uses technical components such as XML schema definition, Java, and Soap Web Services.

**Question: Is there a checklist regulatory partners can use to prepare for System-to-System data exchange?**

**Answer:** A questionnaire is available to capture partner information. A state engagement package is shared during a formal kick-off meeting for onboarding a regulatory partner for data exchange.

**Question: Should a regulatory partner use a specific system to integrate with System-to-System data exchange?**

**Answer**: No, System to System data exchange can be integrated with any system that has the ability to integrate with web services.

**Question: Are the ORA DX systems (Partners Portal and System-to-System) separate systems?**

**Answer:** Yes. The Partners Portal and System-to-System are separate systems integrated within FDA's Information Technology framework.

**Questions: Can any regulatory partner participate in any ORA DX system and capability?**

**Answer:** Yes. Any regulatory partner can choose to participate in any ORA DX system and capability. There could be additional participation criteria for certain ORA DX capabilities. For example, MFRPS conformance is required to participate in ORA DX non-contracted inspection capability.

**Question: Does a regulatory partner have to conduct a certain number of inspections to participate in data exchange?**

**Answer:** No. There is no minimum or maximum number of inspections that should be conducted by regulatory partners to participate in the data exchange program. However, per state contracts, a minimum of ten inspections are expected.

**Question: Does the FDA provide the data exchange specifics and file format to a regulatory partner for the System-to-System and Partners Portal?**

**Answer:** Yes. The FDA provides data fields, formats (XML schema definitions), message constructs, etc., necessary to exchange data using the System-to-System. For the Partners Portal, the FDA provides predefined Excel templates with data fields, data requirements, mapping information to map state data fields to FDA data fields, and instructions to upload the files.

### *Egg Facts*

- Average American eats around 286 eggs a year.
- Iowa produces around 16.5 billion eggs a year.
- Shell color depends on the hen's breed.
- Yolk color depends on the hen's diet.
- The older the hen, the bigger the egg.

For additional ORA DX FAQs
*Read more...*

*"The difference between involvement and commitment is like ham and eggs. The chicken is involved, and the pig is committed." - Martina Navratilova*