



# EXCHANGE STAFF VETERINARIAN

*Veterinary, Preventive Medicine and Public Health Newsletter*

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### Food & Drug Safety/Defense Team Update:

After 30 years of dedicated military service, COL Debbie Vasut will retire from the US Army Veterinary Corps effective 1 February 2015. During her career, COL Vasut was a member of the Exchange team both in Europe and at the Dallas Headquarters. She was always a true professional and championed public health and safety issues throughout the Exchange enterprise. She will be missed and we wish her all the best in retirement. Replacing COL Vasut is COL Erik Topping whose contact information can be found at the end of this newsletter.

### Foodborne Illness Costs:

The importance of proper sanitation, food handling techniques, and preparation cannot be overstated. Recent data from the US Department of Agriculture estimates that foodborne illness costs our economy more than \$15.6 billion annually with more than 8.9 million Americans becoming ill due to foodborne pathogens. As all of you know, a majority of this cost and illnesses can be prevented through proper sanitation, food handling techniques, and ensuring foods are prepared and held at proper temperatures.

### Unsatisfactory Reports:

The Exchange requires that a copy of all inspection reports, for facilities that receive a non-compliant or unsatisfactory rating, be sent to the Exchange Food and Drug Safety Office. This includes negative reports from food service establishments, concessions, barber/beauty shops, and spas. Receipt of these reports allows the Exchange to address local, and potentially systemic, sanitation or public health concerns. Reports can be faxed or emailed to [Food-Drug.Safety@aafes.com](mailto:Food-Drug.Safety@aafes.com)

### Mobile Food Service Vendors:

Mobile food service vendors or "Food Trucks" are becoming much more popular in cities and also on military installations due to their convenience and the variety of menu items that they provide. As with any "brick and mortar" restaurant, mobile food service vendors must comply with all food protection measures. Prior to operating on military installations, the agency awarding the contract i.e., AAFES, must collaborate with Veterinary Service and Preventive Medicine/Public Health activities to determine if the vendor is able to meet food protection requirements.

If awarded a contract, the mobile food service vendor will then be subject to routine inspection by installation Veterinary Service and Preventive Medicine/Public Health personnel to ensure:

- Sanitation and adequacy of food protection of delivery vehicles used to convey food items onto the installation
- Approved source requirements
- Wholesomeness and condition factors of food items
- Food defense and protection of food items while shipped to (or between), stored, or staged at these operations
- Food service sanitation compliance

### Tri-Service Food Code:

The recently published Tri-Service Food Code establishes standardized military food safety standards, criteria, procedures, and roles for sanitary control and surveillance of food to mitigate risk factors known to cause food-borne illness.

#### Major Changes in the Tri-Service Food Code

- Potentially hazardous foods (PHF) now include heat-treated plant foods (e.g. cooked rice, beans, or vegetables), raw seed sprouts, cut melons, cut leafy greens, and cut tomatoes.
- Inspection frequency is based on risk assessment
- Cold holding temperature changed from 40°F to 41°F (5°C) or below.
- Hot holding reduced from 140°F to 135°F (57°C) or above.
- Leftovers: Cold hold up to 72 hours; Hot hold until consumed or discarded
- Time as a Public Health Control: Chilled PHF (TCS) food may be held for up to 6 hours outside of the safe temperature zone as long as the food does not exceed 70°F at any time during the 6-hour period.
- Inspection ratings & rating criteria: Single, uncorrected critical is automatic failure (non-compliant).

### Worldwide Directory Listing Required for Hummus:

Hummus is a ready-to-eat non-dairy product that is stored under refrigeration. The product has always been considered a dip, spread or paste and had previously not

required listing in the Worldwide Directory of Sanitarily Approved Food Establishments for Armed Forces Procurement (Directory). Due to the potential health risks that ready-to-eat products potentially have, the DOD Food Risk Evaluation Committee has determined that hummus must be procured from an approved source listed in the "Directory".

#### Dietary Supplements:

Although products marketed as dietary supplements are sold legally in the United States, this does not imply that they are without possible negative side effects. Just because a product is "natural" does not mean it is "safe". Many natural substances can cause harm so consumers must approach these products with a healthy skepticism. We encourage our AAFES customers to educate themselves on supplements before they make a selection.

Current AAFES policy does not allow sale of dietary supplements under short term agreements (concessionaires) due to concerns for quality and safety. The sale of dietary supplements is only authorized in Exchange retail, GNC, and Vitamin World stores.

#### Pasteurized Juices:

There is a significant difference between pasteurized and unpasteurized juices. Similar to milk, pasteurized juices have been heated to high enough temperatures for a short period of time in order to kill any bacteria or microorganisms that may be present.

During the manufacturing process, fruit and vegetable juice may be contaminated with harmful bacteria present on the surface of the fruit or vegetable. For this reason, most manufactured juices in the US are pasteurized. There is though a small portion of juices sold in the US that are unpasteurized and thus may continue to contain these potential pathogens. Unfortunately consumption of unpasteurized juices has been implicated in serious outbreaks of foodborne illness in the past.

Recognizing the potential health risks with unpasteurized fruit or vegetable juices, DOD policy requires that all juices available for purchase be pasteurized. The Food and Drug Administration also requires that all unpasteurized juice and cider contains the following warning on the label:

**WARNING: This product has not been pasteurized and therefore may contain harmful bacteria that can cause serious illness in children, the elderly and persons with weakened immune systems.**

#### Prohibited Spa & Barber/Beauty Shop Services:

As a reminder, there are several spa and barber/beauty shop services that are not authorized in Exchange

establishments for health and safety reasons. These include:

- Application of eyelash extensions
- Tattoos (to include henna)
- Ear candling
- Electrolysis
- Waxing of genital area i.e., Brazilian wax, or nipples
- Shaving with a straight razor
- Removing ingrown hairs
- Squeezing of pimples or blackheads
- Use of credo blades during pedicures
- Using a styptic pencil to stop bleeding

#### Flu Season Is Upon Us:

The best way to avoid getting the flu is to receive the influenza vaccine. While you may still get the flu even with the vaccine, usually you will have a much milder case. You and your coworkers can help reduce the risk to yourselves and others by following some very simple steps. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Make hand sanitizers available to customers for use on shopping carts/baskets, cash registers for cashiers, and close to Snack Avenue areas. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth – these are routes to infection. Try to avoid close contact with sick people. Report any illness to your supervisor immediately and stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. For more information about the flu and how to reduce the risk of getting the disease, go to the CDC Influenza website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

#### **Contact Us – Dallas Team**

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#### **Useful links (control click to use):**

[Worldwide Directory for Sanitarily Approved Food Establishments for Armed Forces Procurement](#)

[Staff Vet/Food & Drug Safety Program \(AAFES Associates Only\)](#)

[Staff Vet/Food & Drug Safety Program \(Non-AAFES Associates\)](#)