

PROJECT UPDATE: Food Safety/Food Defense

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PROJECT BACKGROUND: This new working group coalesced shortly after the February 2009 GUIRR meeting that focused on the role of inter-sector partnerships in helping to accelerate the path to solutions to safeguarding the nation's food supply. The group immediately set out to host a workshop to engage senior science, technology, and policy personnel from companies, the federal labs, government agencies, and research universities in an open dialogue so as to (1) highlight critical technology collaboration opportunities for maintaining U.S. national defense, focusing on food and the supply chain, and (2) foster new technology collaboration among participants, all of whom possess, manage or oversee particular capabilities (e.g., knowledge, available technology, fundamental research) in the food safety and national defense space.

WORKSHOP: Plans developed quickly and on September 29-30, 2009, nearly 70 subject matter experts attended a ***Technology Workshop on Food Safety and National Defense*** held at the NAS building in Washington, DC. Participants included personnel from 10 national labs that have declared "homeland security" a core mission; senior officials from USDA, FDA, DHS, CDC, and the White House; senior scientists from food and/or national defense companies; university food safety center directors; and the NAS/IOM.

PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATIONS:

- Argonne National Laboratory
- Brookhaven National Laboratory
- Cargill
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Department of Homeland Security
- Food and Drug Administration
- IBM
- IBM T.J. Watson Research Center
- Idaho National Laboratory
- Institute of Medicine
- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
- Lockheed Martin
- Los Alamos National Laboratory
- Mars, Inc
- National Renewable Energy Laboratory
- National Security Council
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
- Sandia National Laboratory
- Savannah River National Laboratory
- The National Academies
- University of Maryland
- University of Minnesota
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- The White House
- 3M

The meeting agenda and formal presentations may be viewed under "Current Projects" on the GUIRR web site at <http://www.nas.edu/guirr>.

UPDATE SINCE JUNE 2010:

Working group member continued to research the formation and tactics of Sematech as one model for successful industry collaboration. The group plans to host a series of three National Food Safety workshops, with the first two-day workshop designed for industry only to be held in January 2011 (postponed from earlier proposed date). The purpose of the first meeting will be to (1) reach common agreement on an industry definition of food safety/security; (2) discuss how disparate industry groups might work together [introduce the Sematech model]; and (3) develop a list of tough problems that require technology solutions. Space at the University of Maryland College Park Inn and Conference Center by Marriott has been reserved.

The second envisioned workshop will involve (only) officials of the 12 federal agencies that have policy or research funding responsibility for food safety.

A third “big” workshop is then intended as a means of summarizing the discussion of the first two workshops; provide a forum for all (industry, agencies, and technology solution providers – academia, national labs, other FFRDCs) to interact; and drive a consensus for next steps.

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