

Food and Beverage Issue Alliance COVID-19 Webinars

Friday, March 20

Speakers: Alison Stout, Post-Doctoral Research Associate, Infectious Diseases Epidemiology and Public Health, Cornell University and Lee-Ann Jaykus, Ph.D.

- Epidemiology
 - COVID-19 is a respiratory disease transmitted primarily from person to person
 - Individuals with significant underlying medical issues include cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and diabetes are at higher risk
 - The estimated disease incubation period is 5 – 14 days
- Transmission
 - The virus is transmitted during the incubation period, primarily via person-to-person, aerosols, surfaces, and hands
 - There is no evidence of transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from food or food packaging

Dr: Lee-Ann Jaykus says this about the risk of foodborne transmission “I think we have to be really cautious about how much time and effort we spend on addressing the very very low risk of transmission through food compared the massive risk of respiratory transmission.”

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - It’s important to recognize that masks should be reserved for health care workers
 - N95 masks are better than surgical masks
 - Surgical masks are generally loosely fitted, do not prevent inhalation or release of virus-laden aerosols, and are not protective for non-infected individuals
 - N95 respirators are more tightly fitted, remove particles from air, and can protect uninfected individuals
- Environmental Persistence
 - SARS-CoV-2 can persist on inanimate surfaces such as metal, glass, plastic for up to 9 days (Cardboard less persistence of the virus than steel and plastic)
- Inactivation (most studies and data are based on SARS-1) and disinfection
 - Surface disinfection procedures (62-71% ethanol; 0.5% hydrogen peroxide; or 0.1% sodium hypochlorite within 1 min.)
(Ethanol and propanol show 3-5 log reduction in viral infectivity within 30 sec. based on concentration)
 - Heat: Research suggests milk pasteurization and cooking conditions are sufficient to inactivate the virus. Full inactivation at 65°C for 3 min.
 - UV-C seems to show the greatest promise; significant log reduction in 5-6 min.
 - pH: The virus appears to be stable between pH 5 – 9.
- FDA update
 - FDA will not recall food from a manufacturing facility because of a sick or ill employees due to COVID-19 and will not conduct any unannounced inspections in the foreseeable future.
- Key control strategies in facilities include:
 - Stagger shifts
 - Prohibit congregation in common areas
 - Wear PPE
 - Wash hands often (best protective measure)
 - Always use GMPs
 - Those who are ill (for any reason) should not come to work