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SUBJ: FoodSHIELD Lessons Learned

1. Since I was the first to actually populate FoodSHIELD with data, there were some glitches to be worked out, and hopefully, all of these that I've encountered have now been worked out so that the next round of participants will not experience the same challenges. However, they should not be surprised if several other glitches occur. Those that I had to deal with were easily and swiftly remedied by Dave Neuman.
2. Obviously, since we are setting up a system to attempt to obtain similar data from all 50 states, and multiple agencies within states, the information requested by FoodSHIELD may not be requested in the fashion that each individual program has developed to record such data. However, I found that in most cases obtaining the data requested only required slight manipulation of the queries of my own data system. Sometimes, I would have to wait on the data, depending on the workload of our IS contact, but that only meant that I might have to wait several days before logging back into the system and entering the data. Now that I know the data being requested by FoodSHIELD, future updates of the data will be easy.
3. Expect to have to ask some questions to fully understand exactly what data FoodSHIELD is seeking. However, in the vast majority of cases, I easily understood what information was being requested and I was able to enter the data without having to seek any guidance at all.
4. Once I had the requested data available, actual entry of the data into the system was easy, and actually took very little time.
5. I have previously heard someone say that they felt they would have to devote a full FTE to make certain that the proper data was entered and kept up to date. After having used this system, I believe that very little time and effort will be necessary to enter initial data, and keeping the data updated, with automatically provided periodic reminders from FoodSHIELD, will be simple and will consume little time and resources.
6. After having used this system, I am even more excited than I was before about the potential of this system to substantially benefit Food Protection and Defense programs and employees throughout the country.
7. The next round of participants will need to understand that there are certain tabs within FoodSHIELD that currently cannot be accessed or populated with data. That is because we are still working out exactly what information we want to obtain under those tabs. However, they should not be afraid to ask questions about tabs that they try to access and cannot, in case their inability to access certain tabs is linked to a glitch that must be worked out.