

EDITOR'S CORNER

Spring is in the air and lots of good things are happening.

1. Cruise Ship Sanitation

Some years ago there were several outbreaks of food poisoning on cruise ships and many people were concerned. The actual number of people affected by food poisoning on cruise ships is not really very high compared with the total number of outbreaks and cases in the USA. However, because a cruise ship is so isolated and when an outbreak occurs at sea the problems are magnified.

The causes of foodborne outbreaks on cruise ships are many, such as contaminated food from suppliers, poor sanitation in the kitchen, breakdown of refrigeration or heating units, accidental contamination by food servers, transmission of foodborne pathogens from workers to passengers or vice versa, environmental factors, etc., etc.

Do not forget that sometimes the passengers and crew members ate food on shore and may bring pathogens to the ship too.

My wife and I have been taking cruises lately because my wife thinks that I work too hard and need some relaxation. Good move. We have taken the *Queen Elizabeth 2* (twice), the *Queen Mary 2*, the *Celebrity Horizon*, and Princess Lines, etc., in the past 3 years. One thing I noticed is that 3 years ago there were no sanitizing dispensers around the food serving areas at all on cruise ships. Last year I started to notice that automatic sanitizing gels were available for passengers to use. Actually, in some buffet lines, workers insisted that diners *must* use bactericidal gel before they gave diners the silverware for food. That is really cool!!

We just took the *QE2* a month ago and sanitizing gels were all over the ship. Almost everywhere you will find a few bottles of the gel hanging around to be used. I think finally food professionals on cruise ships realized the value of these 60% alcohol gels and keep the place and the hands much cleaner than before. I am all for it and know that cruise ships make a serious effort to prevent foodborne infection and intoxication.

2. Award Winning Professor and Student at Institute of Food Technologists

One day a couple weeks ago I received a box of flowers. My secretary asked me if there was a special occasion in my life for someone to send me flowers. "No," I said. I slowly opened the box full of tulips and found a small card. It says "When you received this box call the following number." I immediately called the number and lo and behold the person was the Executive Vice President of the Institute of Food Technologists. I asked her what it was all about. She joyfully said "You have won the 2006 Carl R. Fellows Award!!" I could hardly believe it because I did not even know I was being nominated in 2006!! Wow, what excitement. I jumped up and down and told everybody about the award and wrote a note to my boss, the Dean, the Provost and the President of the University. I also received a lot of congratulations from colleagues, students and friends. It was really a big honor to win this award. I have won awards before, but every award is special and to be treasured.

Two days later, my former student Dr. Dong Hyun Kang from Washington State University called me and said that *he* had won the Samuel Prescott Award for Excellence in Research for young scientists. That award is very prestigious and I am so glad that my former student also won an excellent award in 2006.

So, during the 2006 IFT National Meeting in Orlando, FL in June, 2006 both the old professor and the maturing former student will be on the stage to receive these prestigious awards. Such a combination does not happen too often. I am sure we will both enjoy the moment.

I hope all of you have as much good news as I have this spring.

Enjoy the moment.

Sincerely,
DANIEL Y.C. FUNG