

Why Are We Doing This?

- Funding for food safety and food security is diminishing

Industry/Media Dynamics

- Main food industry considers food safety a prerequisite and not a source of competitive advantage
 - Organic/sustainer groups market it as an advantage
 - Trans fat, BHT free milk, antibiotic free eggs counter examples (formulation)
- Scientific data used out of context to illustrate apparent safety differences

What Will Result From This

- Internal guidance for food safety centers
- Input for the broader university/academic community
- Potential for publication



NATIONAL CENTER FOR
FOOD PROTECTION AND DEFENSE
A HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Centers Ethics Guidelines

- NCFST – no formal guidelines
- UGA – no formal guidelines, FSC does have “unwritten rules”
- Center for Bioethics – no formal guidelines but community discussing basic principles as it goes beyond home institution
 - Taint transfers to all
- IFIC – no formal guidelines



Private Sector Ethics Codes

- Cargill has an annually managed code

Regulation vs. Voluntary

- Strict code of ethics preferred vs. regulation
- Code of ethics vs. code of conduct
 - Principles/values vs. behaviors
 - Which is better for “managing” external funding relationships

Common Code or Principles

- Difficult to define at too broad a scale
- Coordinating standards at investigator/unit level with university or broader definitions difficult
- Codes can potentially be out of synch for center vs. center director vs. regular faculty vs. irregular faculty
- Needs to include all forms of relationships and not just funding
- How to handle global implications and varying national interests on the collaboration and the differing ethical standards

Common Code or Principles

- How can it enable industry partnership without engendering the assumed/inferred conflict?
 - Key is how to be proactive
 - Direct from primary food companies
 - “Indirect” from providers to the food companies
 - “Industry” and “Agriculture” perceptions changing
- Proactive code helps enforce desired compliance
- Utility of a code in enabling productive funding relationships will require a communications campaign on how it accomplishes the protection of the integrity of the work

Mission Driven Focus

- Center mission consistent with University mission
- Partnership goals not in conflict (compatible?) with Center mission
 - Can antagonistic competitors share sufficiently similar goals to partner with the same Center (and reduce negative implication on the Center)?
 - Benefits of a broader array of partners
- Mutually beneficial goals (clearly articulated)

Maintaining Neutrality

- Perceived neutrality if the science favors one stakeholder(s)
- What is the difference between neutral platform for engagement vs. absolute neutrality
- Is neutrality possible:
 - Multiple partners or partners with specific bias?
 - Education mission and support from industry
- How to manage transparency to maintain neutrality or perceptions of conflict

Maintaining Neutrality

- Is funding mechanism important?
 - Source
 - Focus/benefits
- Perceived neutrality if the science favors one stakeholder(s)
- Need to define what “neutrality” means to you and what you will do to maintain it
- Neutral venue vs. neutral position
- “Neutral” vs. “Objective”
- Objective can mean fair minded but able to compromise

Frank Cera's 8 Ethical Principles for Public/Private Partnerships

- Compelling reason
- Manage the interface
- Legal & regulatory box for compliance
- Know the relevant policies & procedures
- Sniff test
- Don't compromise personal integrity (conflict of interest and conflict of commitment)
- Follow the money to understand the source/intent
- Let the right people know the right information at the right time (appropriate people informed)

Clarifying Mission Drives Decisions

- Some missions may be attractive or laudable, but not attractive to potential funders
 - Philanthropy vs. providing unique value
 - Does “what you want to be when you grow up” require government support (e.g., not likely to be stakeholder funded)
- Strategic partnerships require that you be proud to be partners
 - Someone will always find fault, but doesn't inherently damage your credibility

Policy Question

- Who would fund research that deals with the implications of policy that is already in place?