

# Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR) Guidelines to Improve Foodborne Disease Outbreak Response Toolkit

Lauren Rosenberg, MPA  
Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists

## Background

To improve the investigation and control of foodborne disease outbreaks, the multidisciplinary Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR) released consensus guidelines in 2009. The guidelines describe critical elements of local and state food safety programs in public health, environmental health, and agriculture agencies. The guidelines also outline model practices on preparing for, detecting, and controlling foodborne disease outbreaks. Because of resource limitations, competing priorities, and conflicts with existing procedures, the CIFOR *Guidelines* may be difficult to implement locally.

To facilitate implementation of the *Guidelines* at the local level, a Toolkit has been developed to introduce local foodborne disease response staff and teams to the *Guidelines*. The Toolkit will:

- Help public health and environmental health practitioners better understand the *Guidelines* and associated recommendations;
- Examine current local foodborne disease surveillance, investigation, and control activities and identify problem areas;
- Identify activities recommended in the guidelines that will help overcome problem areas; and
- Prioritize recommended activities for implementation based on staff time, expertise, and other resources.

## Toolkit Components

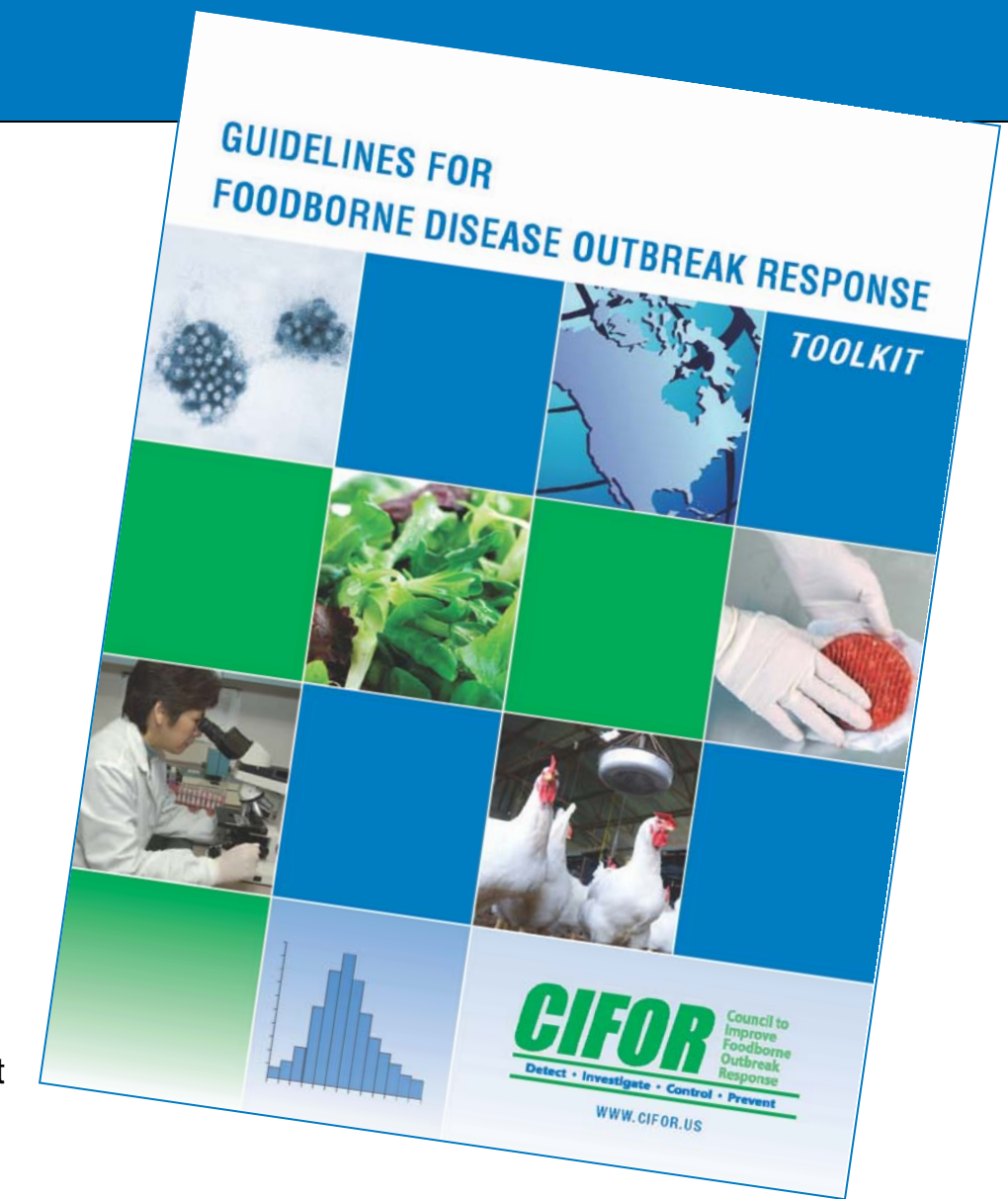
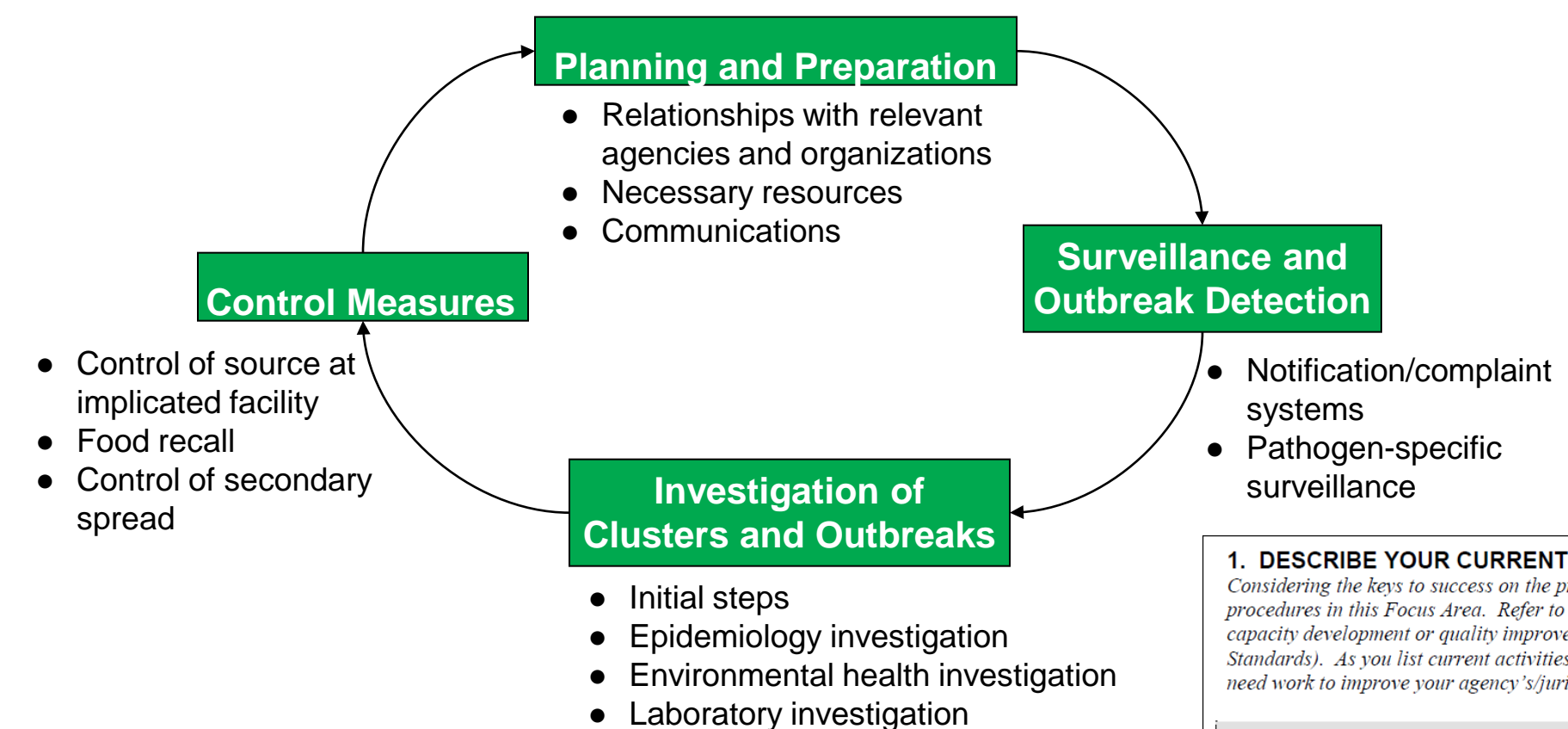
The CIFOR *Guidelines* Toolkit includes tools to direct a multidisciplinary group through a series of steps to evaluate their current practices. This group can use the recommendations in the CIFOR *Guidelines* to incorporate them into foodborne disease outbreak investigation and response practices.

### Components of the Toolkit include:

- **Preliminaries worksheet:** To help identify the participants and resources necessary to use the Toolkit
- **Selecting focus areas worksheet:** To identify parts of outbreak response that are a high priority for an agency
- **Focus area worksheets:** Recommendations from the *Guidelines* were grouped into focus areas. A 3-step process guides groups through the focus area to determine which *Guidelines* recommendations should be implemented in the jurisdiction:
  1. To describe current activities and procedures
  2. To prioritize CIFOR recommendations to address needed improvements
  3. To create an implementation plan for the selected CIFOR recommendations
- **Crosswalk between National Initiatives and the Toolkit:** To demonstrate the bridges between 3 national quality improvement initiatives and the Toolkit

## Focus Areas

**Focus area worksheets:** To group the CIFOR *Guidelines* recommendations into useable groups, focus areas were created. The Toolkit is organized into these focus areas through which the team progresses.



## Next Steps

The Toolkit will be widely distributed at the state and local levels to epidemiologists, environmental health specialists, laboratorians, and regulators in both print and electronic versions.

CSTE intends to implement the *Guidelines* and the Toolkit through a series of webinars and state-based trainings.

**1. DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES IN THIS FOCUS AREA.**  
Considering the keys to success on the previous page, describe your agency's/jurisdiction's current activities and procedures in this Focus Area. Refer to written protocols, if available, and materials related to ongoing efforts in capacity development or quality improvement (e.g., FDA Retail and Manufactured Food Regulatory Program Standards). As you list current activities and procedures related to this Focus Area, indicate those which might need work to improve your agency's/jurisdiction's response to foodborne disease outbreaks.

Activity/Procedure	Needs Improvement? (Check)

**2. PRIORITIZE CIFOR RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS.**  
Having identified activities and procedures in need of improvement, review the CIFOR recommendations related to this Focus Area (listed below). Rate the priority for implementing each recommendation based on its likely impact on foodborne outbreak response at your agency/jurisdiction and available resources. Use a scale of 1 to 5 to rate each recommendation (1=Low priority for implementation and 5=High priority for implementation). If a recommendation is already in place in your agency/jurisdiction, check the appropriate box. If a recommendation is not relevant to your agency/jurisdiction, select N/A. Refer to the blue underlined section number following each recommendation to view the recommendation as it appears in the CIFOR Guidelines.

Recommendation	Already in place	Priority for Improvement in Your Agency/Jurisdiction
		LOW - - - - - HIGH
<u>Outbreak response team</u> Determine the composition of the outbreak response team before an outbreak occurs. (3.2.1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Use teams that include expertise in epidemiology, environmental health, the laboratory, health education, and risk communication to respond to outbreaks. Members may come from different programs within an agency or different agencies. (3.2.2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A
Designate a team leader to help set and enforce investigation priorities, coordinate activities associated with the investigation, and communicate with agency decision makers and other agencies and organizations. (3.2.2.1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 2 3 4 5 N/A

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## Further Information

Please contact Lauren Rosenberg at [rosenberg@cste.org](mailto:rosenberg@cste.org) or 770-458-3811 for further information regarding CIFOR and food safety-related programs and activities. For more information about CIFOR, please visit [www.cifor.us](http://www.cifor.us).