



## National Environmental Assessment Reporting System (NEARS)

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### Notice of Participation

This document identifies the agency/program and personnel participating in the National Environmental Assessment Reporting System (NEARS).

NEARS is a surveillance program through the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Environmental Health to capture environmental causes of foodborne illness outbreaks. In April 2014, agencies/programs participating in NEARS are asked to begin reporting all foodborne illness outbreak environmental assessment data into the NEARS. Information collected through NEARS will be used to

- Establish a detailed characterization of food vehicles and monitor food vehicle trends,
- Identify and monitor contributing factors and their environmental antecedents,
- Provide a basis for hypothesis generation regarding factors that may support foodborne outbreak events, and
- Guide planning, implementation, and evaluation of food safety programs

Food safety programs and the food industry will thereby have information to guide the planning, implementation, and evaluation of foodborne illness prevention activities. NEARS highly encourages state participation. Agencies/programs that choose to participate must identify one **NEARS group administrator** who will be responsible for the following:

- Identifying and verifying all data collectors entering NEARS data for the agency/program
- Monitoring, verifying, and approving all data entered into NEARS for the agency/program
- Serving as NEARS group point of contact (POC) for agencies/programs to CDC

NEARS group administrators are encouraged to complete CDC's free e-Learning on Environmental Assessment of Foodborne Illness Outbreaks.

**Printed Name of NEARS Group Administrator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_







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This document serves as an agreement of participation of (agency/program) \_\_\_\_\_ in the National Voluntary Environmental Assessment Information System (NEARS) of the National Center for Environmental Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

I further understand that (agency/program) \_\_\_\_\_ is solely responsible for the accuracy of data submitted and entered into NEARS. In addition, data entered into NEARS can be used at the discretion of CDC. However, data requests made outside of the participating agency/program (e.g., other federal, state, and local agencies, academia, etc.) can be shared upon written consent of (agency/program) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

***NOTE:*** The agency/program must inform CDC in writing if the NEARS group administrator or any data collector(s) no longer needs access to NEARS within 3 business days of the event. Additionally, all NEARS users must notify CDC of lost or compromised passwords immediately. These notifications can be received via telephone or email.