



AAPFCO

Association of American Plant Food Control Officials

Hosting a Meeting

Appendix II:

"How to Plan and Host the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Control Officials"
American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO)
American Pesticide Control Officials (AAPCO)
American Plant Food Control Officials (AAPFCO)

Introduction:

So, your state wants to host an annual meeting! Consider the following:

1. **Staff** - Are there enough persons available to help with various functions so that one individual will not have to carry the load?
2. **Time** - It takes time to visit hotels/motels to make a site selection, negotiations and planning. Although this can be enjoyable, there must be ample time to thoroughly investigate and consider the location. Also, the staff should have time to prepare, assemble, and mail notices.
3. **Finances** should not be a limiting factor. The three Associations will advance up to \$1,000 to the host as a start-up fee. The remainder of the expenses should be covered by donations, contributions, sponsorships and the registration fees. This is why an ongoing budget is necessary. In the event meeting costs should exceed the budget in the final wrap-up, the three Associations will provide a prorated share to cover the deficit. If there is money remaining after all expenses are paid, this is to be divided (according to attendance) and submitted to the treasurer of each Association.

Issue the invitation at least three years out so that your state has adequate time for planning and making arrangements. A regulatory control official who is a member of one or more of the Associations should issue the invitation and direct it to the secretary of each Association. A copy should be provided to the current president of each organization.

The three secretaries will confer with each other and their respective boards of directors before accepting or declining an invitation. Should an invitation be received from more than one member for a particular year, a deciding factor will be the location. It is hoped that should an invitation be declined, it can be issued for another year. Please keep an alternate year in mind when deciding to host a meeting.

CONGRATULATIONS! YOUR INVITATION HAS BEEN ACCEPTED!

Arrangements

The following are criteria and guidelines to assist in making arrangements:

Location

Most hosts select an area that offers history, entertainment and enjoyment for the visitors. Easy access by air and automobile is important, but not mandatory because transportation arrangements can be made. Remember, this is your opportunity to exploit the virtues of the area. The State Tourist Bureau will be of great assistance in making this decision. Let them do the work.

Site Selection

Of utmost importance is finding a facility that can meet the needs of the meeting. The local tourist/convention bureau will help by contacting the hotel/motel/resorts that can accommodate the group. The facilities will then contact you for your business.

Personal investigation of each facility is necessary. Allow ample time to thoroughly investigate and consider the facilities. The following are absolute requirements:

1. Sleeping rooms to accommodate at least 250/300 people. Will the convention rate apply at least 3 days before and 3 days after the meeting? Some will want to arrive early or stay over so they can see the sights.
2. Meeting Rooms (there should not be a charge for these)
3. General Sessions – to accommodate 150/200 people, theater style.
4. Luncheons or Banquets that may run concurrent with the General Sessions – to accommodate 200 people + head table.
5. Six breakout rooms for committee/board meetings to run concurrently the entire week. These may accommodate from 20 to 100 people set up theater style, conference style, or classroom style as requested by the meeting chair.
6. Restaurants within the facility and also prefer to have additional eateries within walking distance.
7. Complimentary suites for the three presidents for the entire week. The hotel should provide these at no charge because of the sleeping rooms rented and the food and beverage functions. If not, they can extend a very reduced rate that can easily be offset from funds of the meeting budget.
8. Swimming pool. The meeting is sometimes a family vacation and young people are in attendance.
9. Hold block of rooms for a reasonable length of time for members to get travel approval and make travel arrangements. **[Hint:** Before contacting the sales department of a hotel, call reservations and learn their government rates. Then, negotiate toward these rates. Most attendees are state and federal employees and must stay within their per diem.]

Site Inspection Check List:

- Transportation to and from airport rate
- Parking and rate
- Bell persons
- Were you greeted courteously?
- Sleeping Rooms: Special treatment for VIP's; reservation cards; room confirmations; complimentary room requirements; are the rooms spacious; clean & fresh; hangers in the closets; climate controls adequate; soundproof

- Lobby: Spacious; clean and tidy; adequate seating
- Restaurants: How many?; hours of operation; can they accommodate the group?; room service 24 hours
- Elevator Service – is the service adequate, especially during peak periods?
- Registration Area: Convenient to meeting rooms; good flow control; secured storage area for equipment nearby
- Meeting Rooms: Column-free; lighting and climate controls; adequate air flow; sound system; visual aids built in (are union operators required and can host provide equipment)
- Restrooms near meeting areas
- Banquet Areas: Table size; number of guests per waiter; guarantee time; setup overage

Once a hotel/motel/resort has been selected – become best friends with your salesperson and the catering/banquet manager. Keep in constant communication with them.

Only two or three members of the host agency should be designated to deal with the hotel in making arrangements, ordering food, equipment, etc., and signing invoices for the various events. This is protection against anyone charging against the master account.

PUBLICIZING THE MEETING

Following the meeting in the spring, plans can be made for a first notice to be mailed.

The mailing list is voluminous and should be maintained current and up-to-date by deleting the name and address of returned mailings and, after the meeting, add new names of people who attended. During the year contacts will be made requesting to be added to the mailing list. The secretaries may provide additional prospects. It is a courtesy to continue life members on the list in the event they may wish to attend if the meeting is in their area.

FIRST NOTICE – To be mailed in mid-April. This should include the meeting dates, location, name and telephone number of hotel, hotel room rates, meeting registration fees, and any other information desired. Are special fares available? Rental car preferences. Special notes about the location. Include a host contact person and telephone/fax number for further inquiries. If desired, a questionnaire may be included offering selections of activities for prospective attendees. Although response is minimal, it could provide a trend to assist in planning. It is wise to send this mailing by first class mail so that non-deliverable notices will be returned and the mailing list can be updated.

Information should be provided to the Association's secretary for posting on the website. The information must be in electronic format and may include your registration form, hotel information including its website if available, and tourist information about the surrounding area.

MAJOR MAILING – To be mailed at the end of May. This is a large and time-consuming task. This mailing must include:

1. Hotel reservation forms – or include a page with telephone number, convention code, room rates and pertinent facts about the hotel. Include prominently the cutoff date for the convention rates.
2. Meeting registration form listing registration fees and all activities planned with costs involved. This is a very detailed form and important in making guarantees for banquets, tours, etc. There should be an advance registration fee and then a higher fee for late or on-site registration.
3. Programs for each Association meeting. The secretary of each Association prepares and furnishes the host state with an adequate number of programs for the mailing and

additional ones for the meeting site. This should be received by the host state about the middle of May.

4. Description of tours and costs so that registrants can determine whether or not to sign up for themselves, partners or children.
5. Travel information on airlines, rental cars, limo/taxi service, hotel parking.
6. Any other information the host wishes to include.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

A local account should be set up, generally in the name of AACO (Associations of American Control Officials). Two or more members of the host agency should be designated to deposit funds and write checks for payment of services.

Each Association contributes a set amount as start-up funds. These may be used as deposits for events, mailings, etc.

Prepare a preliminary budget that will be updated as the event draws near.

SPONSORS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS

The AACO meeting is fortunate that sponsors and donators permit amenities that could otherwise not be provided and maintain an equitable registration fee for each Association.

Some hosts may have difficulty in soliciting sponsors. If so, check with the secretaries to see if assistance can be arranged. You may want to design a letterhead for the "AACO" so that agency letterhead will not be used.

Letters can be directed to large companies and associations affiliated with each Association and local industries in the host area. Please refer to the list of contributors from the previous meeting. Note that there is a considerable donation from the pesticide industry (NACA) to be applied to the Pesticide banquet.

REGISTRATION

The first impression of your state and the meetings will be made at the hotel and the registration area. Make this a good impression by being friendly and making all who come to the area feel welcome. Be accommodating as possible. SMILE A LOT!

Nametags/badges are very important. The host state may design these with a logo indicative of the state. Also provide a way of indicating the Associations for which the individual has registered. It can appear at the bottom of the nametag. The first name or nickname should appear in very large bold type. Full name, company or Agency and city and state should follow with the full name very prominent.

Each state has its own computer equipment. It is essential to have a database for pre-registration ready to go before responses are expected from the pre-registration mailing. The rate and speed of return of registration forms are variable. A cutoff date for advanced registration is usually set about two weeks prior to the meeting. Higher registration fees applicable after the cutoff date are at least a minor incentive for people to be prompt in returning their registration forms.

On-site registration, whether it is providing the registration package to advance registrants or actually registering attendees, will be hectic at times. The host needs to have all badges, gifts,

tickets and event information on hand and organized. The computer and printer used to maintain the registrant data must be available at all times during registration. Since it is frequently necessary to generate updates on various counts for tours, meals, etc., the database should be designed to facilitate generation of many ad-hoc reports. Having numbered tickets for each event will provide a second method of confirming the number of persons to guarantee for food functions and tours.

Having the pre-registration section separate from the on-site registration section will eliminate some of the rush time lines and ease the waiting in line for those who have pre-registered.

Registration hours need to correspond to all Associations' meeting periods. Registration need not operate after 5:00 p.m. Registration can close late Thursday or Friday morning.

It is important that a computer with printer is available to prepare reports and other information that the Associations may require. Copy facilities should also be available whether it is through the hotel or a nearby copying center.

An electronic file of the registrants coded as to "control" or "industry" should be available and sent to the Associations' secretaries.

HOSPITALITY SUITE

The AACO meeting hospitality suite can be the social hub of the weeklong meetings. It can be located in a function space very close to the meeting room, be situated close to the hotel recreational facilities, a large suite. Some things to consider are ample space and a relaxed environment; a variety of seating spaces and groupings and although not necessary, a good view adds a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere. Hotel limitations are very important where hospitality rooms are concerned since they frequently will insist on furnishing everything served if a function space is used. Where regular suites can be used, as a general rule, you may furnish food as well as have the hotel provide some service like coffee if such is desired.

There are several considerations in determining how elaborate a hospitality suite will be: available sponsor funding or in kind support; arrangements acceptable to the hotel; number of host state employees/or volunteers for staffing; and the number of operating hours. If the hotel is willing to provide a good size entertainment suite complimentary or at reasonable cost, this is the best solution by giving the hotel some business (coffee, etc.) while being in a position to supply other foods (donuts, chips, cokes, etc.) at a reasonable cost. Taking advantage of big lot purchasing (Sam's or others), the expenses are reduced.

Meeting attendees enjoy the opportunity to stop by the hospitality suite early in the morning for coffee, tea, milk, juice and danish. In order to accommodate a breakfast crowd on Tuesday and Wednesday, you must be well prepared in advance. Opening early can be a strain on the host state staff and volunteers, but it can be very rewarding to know that in doing so many are served and pleased.

This is also a meeting place for partners, children and guests. They may visit the suite early morning also or use the hospitality suite prior to tours and events.

The hospitality room should be open early on the first Friday afternoon from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. The remainder of the week, it should be opened early every morning through Friday morning. There is little need to have the hospitality area open in the evenings, but this can be utilized for children's food and entertainment during the Associations' banquets.

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

Daytime tours should be planned for attendees not scheduled for a meeting, partners, guests and children on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Length of the tour is at the discretion of the host, but plan to return to the hotel in ample time for getting ready for the evening functions. The prices charged for the tours should be equal to or more than the actual cost to the host. People are willing to pay this in order to see interesting and informative sights of the area. Numbered tickets will help in determining the number in addition to the daily registration information.

BREAKS AND REFRESHMENTS IN THE MEETING AREA

Generally, there are morning and afternoon breaks during the meetings that may be sponsored by an industry group or member. The sponsor should be provided with hotel contacts so the details of the sponsorship can be worked out between the host state and the hotel.

Morning breaks usually consist of coffee, tea, juice, danish, bagels, etc. Afternoon breaks can have coffee, tea cold drinks, cookies or something sweet, popcorn, fresh fruit or light fare.

WEDNESDAY WELCOME LUNCHEON AND OUTING

Wednesday is the day most people are in attendance, so it is the opportunity for you to promote your state and dignitaries.

The Welcome Luncheon is your baby! You select the menus, speakers/ entertainment, head table, everything. It is THE chance to show-case your state and organization. As currently organized this is a self-supporting function and all persons attending must purchase a ticket.

The Wednesday evening outing is scheduled so registrants can relax and enjoy local color. Again, this is designed by the host state and should include some sort of tour or entertainment at a tourist site, transportation and dinner. This is also a self-supporting function and all persons attending must purchase a ticket. Just be sure expenses are covered.

RECEPTIONS, BANQUETS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Each Association has a banquet during their time scheduled. This may be held in the hotel or away from the hotel, depending on funds available. If the banquet is held away from the hotel, then transportation must be provided. The secretaries of the Associations will select the menus preferred.

A ticket may be provided to each registrant at no charge. Additional tickets may be purchased for partners and guests. The price charged should be based on actual cost to the host. If contributions have been ample, this charge can be reduced.

There is generally a reception just prior to the banquet. You may have hosted bar or cash bar, depending on funds or sponsors available, or you may have a combination by providing a certain number of drink tickets to each registrant, and they may purchase additional drinks. Remember that there is a bartender fee and cashier's fee. These may be waived by the hotel if a det income has been received by the hotel. Check this out when negotiating and also try to negotiate all drinks at the hosted bar price.

The entertainment during each banquet is the selection of the host state. They make the arrangements and pay the costs from the AACO funds.

MEETING ROOMS AND ARRANGEMENTS AND A/V EQUIPMENT

There is a master list of meeting rooms that is made available to each secretary. It is the secretary's responsibility to advise the host state of the times and set-up of each meeting room they need along with any special equipment or A/V needs. It is important that this schedule is maintained by the host state so that duplications of meeting times and rooms are not selected by the Associations resulting in a conflict. Each secretary should confer with the host prior to issuing public notice of meetings.

A/V equipment – specifically screens, TV, VCR, a computer with projector - should be made available by the hotel, by an A/V company in close proximity to the hotel or supplied by the host state itself. The General Session room set-up should remain all week. The extras can be placed as needed. It is wise to designate a person or committee to be responsible for seeing that the equipment is placed as needed. Again, it is the responsibility of the Associations' secretaries to advise of these needs.

GIFTS AND DOOR PRIZES

These are optional, but generally a small gift is presented to each registrant at the registration area. These may be purchased through the AACO funds or if a sponsor or donator is available, be sure to recognize them in some way.

Door prizes are not required, but if funds permit, it is a nice touch to present at each Association General Session, possibly at the Welcome Luncheon and Banquet.

CLOSING REQUIREMENTS

The host is responsible for paying all accounts with the hotel, tours and other functions pertaining to the meeting. Once this is accomplished, a financial report is prepared and presented to the secretaries and treasurers of each Association. If there is a deficit, the three Associations will prorate the costs according to the number of registrants at each Association meeting. If there are funds remaining once the Association advances are reimbursed, the balance is prorated according to the number of registrants of each Association meeting and payment is made to the Association.

Update the mailing list.

Update the hotel sleeping room rentals on the chart that appears in the appendix for future hosts to use in selecting and negotiating with other hotels.

When completed, provide this appendix with your comments to the next host state for its use and to the Education and Information Committee so that the committee can maintain the information on a year-to-year basis.

The Education and Information Committee should supply copies of this information to future hosts to assist them in making preliminary arrangements.