

Meat Processing News

Status of the Mega Reg

To reduce the risk of foodborne illness associated with meat and poultry, the United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA, FSIS) proposed major changes to the meat inspection program. This initiative entitled "Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems" was published February 3, 1995 in the Federal Register. Commonly referred to as the "Mega Reg," these initiatives will impact State and USDA inspected meat and poultry plants.

The first initiative described in the Mega Reg describes practices that would be implemented as quickly as possible to reduce the occurrence and numbers of pathogenic microorganisms in meat and poultry. These include

- (1) the development and implementation of plant standard operating procedures for sanitation;
- (2) mandatory antimicrobial treatments at slaughter;
- (3) microbial testing of carcasses at slaughter, raw ground meat or poultry, and fresh sausages, to ensure adequate processing controls;

- (4) temperature and chilling requirements for carcasses and raw meat products; and
- (5) transportation temperature requirements.

The second initiative would mandate HACCP for all establishments. It was proposed that small establishments be allowed three years to implement HACCP following publication of the final rule.

According to the National Meat Association (NMA), USDA received 6,855 comments on the Mega Reg. Nearly three-fourths of the responses were form letters, primarily from the Center for Science in the Public Interest and the American Association of Meat Processors. Of these, 2,470 responses supported the proposed regulation, while 2,524 were not in favor of the proposal. Based on the remaining 1,861 comments, NMA summarized the responses according to each proposed initiative.

If you haven't submitted your comments to USDA about the pathogen reduction initiatives and HACCP, it's not too late to send them in. USDA reopened the comment period August 11, 1995 and will continue to accept comments until October 30, 1995. Submit three copies of your written comments to: Dianne Moore, Docket Clerk, Room 3171 South Building, Food Safety and Inspection Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

As part of the rulemaking process, USDA, FSIS has held a series of public meetings in Washington, D.C., during September to discuss key concerns that were raised during the first comment period. Ideally, USDA, FSIS would like to have a final rule in place by the end of this year. In addition, USDA, FSIS has released a preliminary report entitled "Top-to-Bottom-Review" which examines the Agency's future roles, resource allocation and organizational structure. This 4-volume, 600-page report can be obtained by contacting the National Technical Information Service at (703) 487-4650. Public comments on the report will be accepted through October 31, 1995.

Initiative	Number of Responses Supporting the Initiative	Number of Responses Opposing the Initiative
Sanitation SOPs	76	66
Mandatory Antimicrobial Carcass Treatments	44	155
Microbiological Sampling	26	169
Carcass Cooling Requirements	31	106
Transportation Requirement	27	91
HACCP	482	763
Special Provision for Small Businesses (3 years to implement HACCP)	11	592

Upcoming Events

Kansas Meat Processors Association
Board Meeting
October 15

Ramada Inn, Manhattan
Contact Tom Pyle (913) 542-2151

Practical Food Safety & Quality
Assurance Workshop
October 25—Hutchinson
October 26—Garden City
October 27—Colby
November 1—Lawrence
November 2—Erie
Contact Liz Boyle (913) 532-1247

Kansas Meat Processors Association
District Meeting
January 1996

The Butcher Block, Larned
Contact Sande McCoy
(316) 285-6376 or (316) 285-3826

Getting a Jump Start on HACCP
February 23—Manhattan
March 5—Wichita
March 6—Garden City
March 12—Hays
March 13—Salina
April 9—Pittsburg
April 10—Overland Park
Contact Liz Boyle (913) 532-1247,
Fadi Aramouni (913) 532-1668

Kansas Meat Processors Association
Convention
May 3-6—Great Bend
Contact Tom Pyle (913) 542-2151

Labeling Changes for Ingredient Statements

Do you use ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, cheese or other multi-ingredient foods as part of your meat product formulation?

Beginning August 8, 1995, amended regulations require that ingredients in standardized food products be listed on your product labels. For example, an ingredient statement on a jerky label might currently list: Beef, soy sauce, salt, garlic powder, pepper and sodium nitrite. To meet the amended regulation, the revised ingredient statement would list: Beef, soy sauce (water, salt, hydrolyzed soy protein, corn syrup, caramel coloring), salt, garlic powder, pepper and sodium nitrite. All of the ingredients that make up the soy sauce are now included as part of the ingredient statement.

According to the Kansas Division of Inspection, state-inspected establishments will

be permitted to use existing label supplies. However, make any necessary modifications to your ingredient statements before reordering product labels. If you are developing new products, the ingredient statement must meet the amended labeling regulations. In addition, if you use protein hydrolysates in your products, you are encouraged to identify the source from which the protein was derived.

The amended labeling regulation also requires the listing of all FDA-certified color additives, and all ingredients in cured meat used in the formulations of meat and poultry products. If bacon pieces are part of a product formulation such as liver sausage, all of the ingredients used to formulate the bacon would need to be listed as part of the ingredient statement.

Meat Nutrition Posters Available

Updated posters and brochures featuring nutritional data for meat and poultry are available from the Food Marketing Institute. Although the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act does not require nutritional labeling of raw, single-ingredient meat and poultry products, USDA has encouraged retail establishments to voluntarily provide point of purchase information on 45 products. The updated Nutri-Facts kit will provide nutritional information on beef/veal, pork/lamb, and chicken/turkey. Contact: Food Marketing Institute, 800 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20006, 202-452-8444.

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Meat Processing News is published for Kansas meat processors by the Department of Animal Sciences and Industry, Cooperative Extension Service, Kansas State University.

For more information or questions, please contact Extension Animal Sciences and Industry at (913) 532-1247.



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