

# Meat Processing News

Department of Animal Sciences and Industry  
Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

## Updated Sanitation Requirements for Meat and Poultry Establishments

On October 20, 1999, the United States Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA FSIS) published a final rule on updated sanitation requirements for meat and poultry establishments that will become effective January 25, 2000. FSIS converted current prescriptive sanitation requirements to performance standards and consolidated sanitation regulations applicable to both meat and poultry establishments. The performance standards are based on current science and are consistent with the HACCP philosophy of placing the responsibility for ensuring food safety on establishments. According to this rule, plants will be free to determine practices that are appropriate and sufficient in maintaining sanitary conditions and preventing adulteration of product as long as these practices meet the performance standards. *If establishments are in compliance with the past sanitation requirements, they may continue their current sanitation practices and still be in compliance with the performance standards.* The rule can be assessed through the internet at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/fr/99-26983.htm>.

The final rule states that, "Each official establishment must be operated and maintained in a manner sufficient to prevent the creation of insanitary conditions and to ensure that product is not adulterated." An example of a performance standard is: "Equipment and utensils must be maintained in sanitary condition so as not to adulterate product." As a result of this performance standard, the requirement of using 180°F water for sanitizing knives or saws has been deleted. Establishments may continue using 180°F water, however, or use an alternate method that prevents product adulteration by dirty equipment and utensils. In essence, plant operators now have the responsibility and flexibility to determine the means that are most appropriate and effective within their processing environment to prevent product adulteration by dirty equipment and utensils.

The regulation addresses establishment ground and facilities in a more general manner. Pest management programs must prevent the harborage and breeding of pests, and pest control substances must be safe and effective. The rule addresses walls, floors, and ceilings and requires that they be durable materials impervious to moisture and be cleaned and sanitized to prevent adultera-

tion of products. Lighting requirements now state that "lighting of good quality and sufficient intensity to ensure that sanitary conditions are maintained...must be provided..." and applies to areas where food is processed, handled, stored, or examined; where equipment and utensils are cleaned; and in hand-washing areas, dressing and locker rooms, and toilets.

Other topics covered in the final rule include: ventilation; plumbing; sewage disposal; water supply and water, ice, and solution reuse; dressing rooms, lavatories, and toilets; equipment and utensils; and employee hygiene. For example, "water, ice, and solutions (such as brine, liquid smoke, or propylene glycol) used to chill or cook ready-to-eat product may be reused for the same purpose, provided that they are maintained free of pathogenic organisms and fecal coliform organisms and that other physical, chemical, and microbiological contamination have been reduced to prevent adulteration of product."

Cleanliness, clothing, and disease control are covered in the employee hygiene section of the rule. Overall, employees must adhere to hygienic practices while on duty and wear aprons, frocks, or other outer clothing that is disposable or readily cleaned. Clean garments must be worn at the start of the day and be changed throughout the day to prevent adulteration of product and the creation of insanitary conditions. In addition, employees having an infectious disease, open lesion, or any other abnormal source of microbial contamination are to be excluded from any operations which could result in product adulteration.

The topics found within the final rule are covered in more detail in a FSIS publication entitled *Sanitation Performance Standards Compliance Guide*. The 42-page guide can be accessed from the FSIS website at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/haccp/haccp-guide.htm> and contains the following sections:

- Sources of Sanitation Information
- Comments on this Document
- Performance Standards
  - General Rules
  - Establishment Grounds and Facilities
    - Grounds and pest control
    - Construction
    - Light
    - Ventilation
    - Plumbing
    - Sewage disposal
    - Water supply and water, ice, and solution reuse
    - Dressing rooms, lavatories, and toilets

- Equipment and Utensils
- Sanitary operations
- Employee hygiene
- Tagging insanitary equipment, utensils, rooms or compartments
- Appendices
  - Past Sanitation Requirements
  - Chemical Use

## New Product Ideas

Are you looking for new product ideas? The top 10 sources rated by Prepared Foods as extremely and/or very valuable for new food or beverage products ideas are:

1. Competitors
2. Trade shows or conferences
3. Industry/trade publications
4. Ingredient suppliers
5. Restaurants (foodservice trade)
6. Culinary publications
7. Corporate/research chefs
8. Industry/trade websites
9. Consultants
10. Contract labs

Ethnic cuisine continues to be an important influence in determining flavor trends. In the next few years, the use of sweet flavors, especially fruits, in combination with meats and hot and spicy products are expected to increase. Some key ingredients that are expected to rise in popularity are capers, coconut milk, tamarind, specialty sugars such as molasses and sugar cane, mint, sea salt, horseradish berries, and dried fruits.

*Source: Prepared Foods 2000 R&D Investment Survey, Prepared Foods, Oct 1999 168(10): 50, and Perspectives: Flavor Trends, Food Product Design, Nov 1999 9(8):109-114.*

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## Tidbits

- Thermometer calibration is an important standard operating procedure. To help Kansas processors with thermometer calibration, a Thermometer Calibration Guide was developed that will soon be distributed to all Kansas meat and poultry establishments. This will be accompanied by a bi-lingual laminated, illustrative guide that can be easily displayed.
- Dr. Mike Boland in Agricultural Economics will be conducting a survey this spring on the economic assessment of HACCP in very small plants. Liz Boyle and Mike Boland will also assess how HACCP has impacted Kansas meat and poultry processors.

## Upcoming Events

KMPA Annual Conference • April 14-16 • Salina  
Contact Alan Wapelhorst • (316) 532-2727

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## Meat Processing News

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

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