

# **National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection**

## **Update on Data Acquisition to Anticipate Foodborne Hazards**

### **Purpose**

This updates a November 2004 Issue Paper on data sharing. FSIS proposed sharing data among industry, academia and the Agency. This sharing would facilitate:

- identifying hazards and implementing effective programs to ensure food safety, and
- allocating resources to verify food safety system control in plants based on risk.

### **Background**

The Committee recommended that FSIS explore ways that industry, academia, consumers, and other stakeholders can transfer data to FSIS. Considerations include:

- incentives for participation,
- administration of a data depository,
- responsiveness to FSIS data needs, and
- data quality.

The Committee also recommended a pilot data-sharing project that was:

- non-controversial, and
- addressed an issue of interest to FSIS such as the use of indicator bacteria to assess process control or effectiveness of equipment disinfection protocols.

### **Discussion**

The Agency has made initial progress in encouraging companies to share data on how they anticipate and control potential foodborne hazards. For example, a company with red meat slaughter operations has offered to provide FSIS with blinded data on indicator organism counts and the presence or absence of pathogens on carcasses. Several poultry operations have also signaled that they are willing to share data on the effectiveness of their interventions.

The Agency would like to use such shared data as one basis for risk-based inspection activities. At the November 2004 National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection meeting, the Agency was advised to pursue a short term goal of implementing a pilot data sharing activity. Over the long term, the Agency would like to establish a data depository that many companies use to share data on how they predict and prevent foodborne disease hazards, and that enables FSIS to make more informed decisions about

how to assign the frequency of food safety verification testing (i.e., risk-based inspection).

The Agency will continue to pursue ways to further progress on this issue.

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