

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection

Update on Increasing Industry Awareness About New Technology Staff Cooperative Agreements

Purpose

The purpose of this briefing is to provide the Committee with an update on the status of its recommendations to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), made on June 16-17, 2005, regarding how the New Technology Staff (NTS) can provide assistance and disseminate information to small and very small plants.

Background

NTS receives information on many promising new technologies designed to improve the safety of meat, poultry, and egg products. Many of these new technologies have resulted in significant improvements in the safety of meat, poultry and egg products in recent years. FSIS would like to see these advances continue.

The development of new technologies, much like new pharmaceuticals, often requires large amounts of capital. The implementation of new technologies often requires extensive infrastructure. Many small and very small establishments do not have the resources or infrastructure to develop, purchase or implement many of the emerging new technologies.

Discussion

Each year since 2003, FSIS has entered into cooperative agreements with state, academic and research institutions to identify, develop and validate new technologies for small and very small establishments to help them improve their ability to meet food safety requirements. Cooperators have been asked, for example, to help determine which technologies are economically feasible for small and very small establishments. We hope this information will foster adoption of new technologies.

NTS has begun posting the results of these cooperative agreements on the FSIS website as they are finalized. So far the 2003 cooperative agreements have resulted in nine technologies that small and very small establishments can access and use. These include a carcass sanitizing spray system for beef and swine carcasses, post-processing pasteurization of beef snack sticks and natural casings for wieners to control *Listeria monocytogenes* and interventions for beef trim to be used in ground beef products.

Based on the Committee's recommendations, NTS is using the following new means of disseminating 2003 cooperative agreement information to small and very small plants.

- FSIS has posted to its web site nine easily understood summaries of work done under cooperative agreements. These summaries can be found on the FSIS website under “Food Safety Technologies Applicable for Small and Very Small Plants”:

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations/Technologies_Applicable_for_Small_Very_Small_Plants_FY2003/index.asp

Full detailed reports on the specific cooperative agreements are available from the NTS.

- The NTS is in the process of sending out a letter to State Agriculture Departments, County Extension Agents, trade associations, and technology providers to make them aware of the posting to the website and other information pertaining to new technologies. This notification may also encourage the technology providers to continue to bring forth new technologies that can be utilized by the small and very small plants.
- In addition, in 2005, FSIS established an information resource list that provides a brief summary describing some of the new technologies that it has received and reviewed, and for which FSIS has had “no objection” or concern for their use in FSIS establishments. These technologies may be applicable for small and very small plants.

This list titled “Food Safety and Inspection Service New Technology Information Table” can be found on the FSIS website at:

www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations/New_Technology_Table/index.asp

FSIS intends to disseminate results from cooperative agreements awarded in 2004 and 2005 in the same manner.

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