RISK-BASED INSPECTION SYSTEMS
FSIS EMPLOYEE FOCUS GROUPS

Focus Group Format

– Four sessions
– Approximately 40 people
– Moderators Guide
– PowerPoint Presentation
– Q&A

Issues Addressed

– Anticipate Problems
– Risk based Factors
– Work to be done
– Design of Inspection Activities
– Response to Findings
– Continuing Communications

ISSUE # 1: Anticipate Problems

Q.1.1 What information should we be capturing so we can easily identify emerging problems?

- More plant records and data
- Sanitary Conditions
- In-house lab results
- Consumer Complaint Information

ISSUE # 1: Anticipate Problems

Q.1.2 What risks in the establishments do you believe are not adequately addressed when it comes to food safety?

– Food borne Illness
– Promoting Farm-to-Table
– Distribution Issues

ISSUE # 2 – Risk-Based Inspection Factors

The factors considering to drive RBIS are:
- inherent hazard, which is a function of species, processing, interventions and production volume;
- the intrinsic effectiveness of the establishments risk-management system (design);
- how well establishments implement their risk management system;
- evidence of pathogen control effectiveness (FSIS sampling results);
- evidence of post-shipment problems (recalls, consumer complaints).

ISSUE # 2: Risk-Based Inspection Factors

Q.2.1 What do you think of the factors and are these factors appropriate for the risk-based approach ?

- All four groups agreed with the factors

ISSUE # 2: Risk-Based Inspection Factors

Q. 2.2 What other factors should we consider?

- Looking at pre-plant arrival of products, residues, and chemicals.
- Plant employee issues.
- More inspectors.
- Adequate resources.

ISSUE # 3: Work To Be Done

Q.3.1 Are there additional ways to guide inspectors as they perform their activities?

- "We like they system that we're in."
- Suggested more flexibility and training to empower the inspectors.
- Develop a guide to assist relief inspectors.

ISSUE # 4 : Design of Inspection Activities

Q4.1 What additional ways do you suggest that FSIS incorporate into its risk-based inspection activities? Why are they helpful?

– More In-plant verification and record-keeping.

ISSUE # 5: How should Risk-Based Systems Respond to Findings

Q.5.1 Is the general approach satisfactory or are there other ways to respond?

– Generally a satisfactory approach
– Revise the laws and regulations.
– Define what makes good control or bad control.
– Data Quality

ISSUE # 6: Continuing Communications with Employees

Q.6.1. How do you suggest we keep Agency employees informed on our progress of implementing an enhanced risk-based system?

– Continue using FSIS News and Notes, the internet, and the Beacon.
– Lack of time
– Inadequate computer resources
– Information overload

WRAP-UP

What idea or thought heard today is most important to enhancing our risk-based system in FSIS?

– Inspection resources

– Communication
– Data quality and integrity
– Empowerment of in-plant inspection personnel