

**National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection**  
**May 23-24, 2006**

**Sub-Committee Number #2**

**Issue:** *Strategic Implementation Plan for Enhancing Outreach to Small and Very Small Plants*

**1. What suggestions do you have for how FSIS, through the International HACCP Alliance, could locate industry representatives who are willing to share expertise and other technical resources and assistance with very small plants?**

The Subcommittee recognizes that FSIS has a history of cooperative efforts with the International HACCP Alliance and it seems appropriate for the Agency to cooperate with the Alliance in the current efforts. The Subcommittee recommends that FSIS contact the Alliance directly to explore how the Alliance may be able to serve the industry and the Agency in facilitating the flow of expertise and technical resources from those who have them (academia, industry representatives, trade associations, state contacts, etc.) to those who need them (small and very small meat and poultry plants). As the Agency implements its plan to serve as a “one-stop” solution to establishments needing assistance, having a third party entity (like the Alliance) compiling and coordinating available resources could lend efficiency to the process.

**2. What suggestions do you have for how FSIS could obtain data on the types of support the small and very small plants need for their food safety systems?**

The Subcommittee recommends that FSIS communicate directly with each federally-inspected establishment via postal mail, direct email, email through Consumer Safety Inspectors (CSIs), or other means about what types of support are commonly needed and how establishments can access that support (through the 800 number, Website, state contacts, etc.). As the Agency compiles findings from several years’ worth of Food Safety Assessments, it can identify common “gaps” in supporting documentation. Ongoing Agency/industry roundtable meetings can also serve as sources for identifying support needs. Another method to obtain the data on types of support needed could be for FSIS to provide a web-based mechanism for industry representatives, associations or other entities to submit commonly asked questions or support needs.

**3. What suggestions do you have for how FSIS could best work with a users group (consisting of all partners) to provide feedback on the usefulness of existing tools and services, to pilot new activities or materials, and to make recommendations on how to improve the outreach function to better meet the needs?**

The Subcommittee recommends that FSIS provide a mechanism for feedback on its existing tools and services (e.g., Website and 800 number). The Agency should explore opportunities to participate in forums to solicit feedback at industry meetings. Further, it should encourage industry groups to hold forums for feedback during their meetings. Another means of getting feedback could be to have CSIs solicit feedback from inspected establishments during weekly meetings. Extension groups should be provided an opportunity to provide feedback (possibly through the HACCP Alliance). Finally, FSIS

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should expand its use of user focus groups (e.g., the upcoming food defense focus group of small and very small establishments) to develop targeted feedback on programs, materials and other resources. These focus groups could also assist the Agency in prioritizing the action steps contained in its Strategic Implementation Plan for Strengthening Small and Very Small Plant Outreach.

**4. What other suggestions do you have for FSIS for strengthening our strategy for outreach to small and very small plants?**

The Subcommittee recommends that the Agency move forward with its Strategic Implementation Plan for Strengthening Small and Very Small Plant Outreach. Agency communications (directives, notices and other communications) should be in plain, straightforward language that states very clearly what the establishment's responsibilities are. Also, these materials need to be made available in multiple languages and formats.

Establishments that participate in Agency outreach activities should receive some kind of recognition for doing so.

The Agency should explore the possibility of submitting articles or columns in trade publications that deliver outreach messages and solicit feedback from user groups.