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From: michael_rudzki@juno.com@i
To: OSECNET.SEC1(AVENEMAN)
Date: 2/7/01 11:52AM
Subject: Proposed Rule on Performance Standards for Processed Meat and Poultry Products

Ann Veneman
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250

97-013P-1
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Michael Rudzki

Dear Ann Veneman,

Please immediately approve publication of the proposed regulation on "Performance Standards for the Production of Processed Meat and Poultry Products." It had been previously sent by USDA to the Federal Register, but was never published. I was disturbed to see that it was held back because President Bush's Chief of Staff ordered a hold on all new regulations.

This proposed regulation was developed in response to a recent Listeria outbreak in which ready-to-eat meat, including hot dogs and deli meats, sickened one hundred consumers and killed 21, including six miscarriages. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that Listeria causes 2,300 hospitalizations and 500 deaths per year. Clearly, this is a critical health and safety regulation that you should release on an emergency basis.

Listeria especially sickens and kills the elderly, pregnant women, unborn children, young children and the immunocompromised. It is hard to think of any reason why you would not want to strongly support safeguards for them. You hold their protection in your hands.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this. I look forward to seeing you continue to strengthen USDA's food safety programs.

Sincerely,

Michael Rudzki
5555 Spring Valley #1039
Dallas, Texas 75240

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