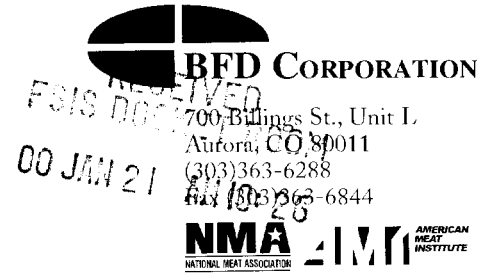


January 20, 2000

FSIS Docket Clerk
Docket No. 98-027R
Room 102, Cotton Annex
300-12th Street SW
Washington DC 20250-3700

23

98-027R-23
98-027R
John Shook



Re: Advanced Meat Recovery

Thank you for the reopened comment period. It speaks highly of FSIS' intent to accomplish a solution to this lingering controversy; a solution that is compatible with peer approved science and FSIS's responsibility established under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA). . . . FSIS is responsible for uniformly applying inspection procedures, standards for sanitation, humane slaughter, facilities and equipment and product labeling at all establishments under federal inspection. . .

The keywords are peer-approved science and the uniform application of law.

FSIS is well aware of "why" this controversy continues. FSIS must recognize this fact and especially it's influence on FSIS in it's proposed rulemaking, and why the National Consumers League and other advocacy groups support it.

The proposed rule has been heavily lobbied for, by an influential Low Temperature Renderer, National Consumers League, Consumer Federation of America, and other paid guns – primarily former FSIS employees – now consultants.

I would expect each of the foregoing to collectively address the following:

1. Ignore the fact – this is not and never has been a public concern, a public health or food safety issue.
2. Offer similar pre-identified resolutions as follows:
 - Lower pressure, lower dwell time.
 - Label meat produced by Advanced Meat Recovery Systems (AMR) as Mechanically Separated Species (MSS).
 - Using poultry as a supporting example.
 - Attempt to offer "employed" science to substantiate a pre-conceived position i.e. theoretical science (applying the rule of exception to a predisposed position).
 - Compare AMR produced meat to hand deboned meat (see 9 CFR 301.2 (rr) subparagraph 2 and Directive 7160.2).
 - Blind reliance on a non-scientific 1996 survey.

- This survey failed to collect hand trim from the same bones and near the bone as is processed by AMR Systems.
- Actually collected trim from a plant lacking an AMR System and yet, used as a comparison for hand trim.
- Failed to correctly identify – fed cattle vs. spent cows and bulls.
- Failed to reflect species, age, anatomical location, etc. of both hand trim and deboned meat by AMR Systems.
- Failed to consider the removal of cartilage, connective tissue and muscle sheath by AMR Systems and the resultant impact on iron.

In addition, I would like to take this opportunity to include within my comments remarks by Thomas J. Billy, Administrator of FSIS made to this US Chamber of Commerce on November 15, 1999.

His responsibility: “This includes setting standards for the safety of these foods, inspecting products according to these standards and responding to outbreaks of food borne illness attributed to these products”.

Quoted Comments: “It is not easy for the public to separate fact from fiction.”

Key Statement of Policy: “. . . maintain confidence in the safety of the food supply, and avoid chaos that will result if we do not. And to do that, we must see that science guides our food safety decisions.”

Further Remarks:
(Risk Analysis) “Once hazards are identified, risk managers can weigh options to address these hazards.”
“. . . Risk analysis is the overarching term used to describe a three-part structure that consists of risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication.

Risk assessment is the process of assessing the risks related to a specific pathogen. Risk management is the process of using this information to evaluate options and select strategies to manage those risks. Risk communication is the process of communicating the risks defined by the risk assessment to the public.”

Now, the question that FSIS must address is, where is the risk identified as it pertains to meat produced by AMR Systems?

Secondly, why is FSIS excluding Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point Systems processes – based on sound science from it's proposed rulemaking?

Thirdly, how can FSIS deny they are applying standards (law making) biasing one product and benefiting another i.e., FSIS uniformly must apply the setting of standards and application of law?

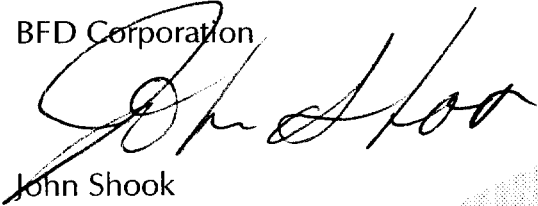
Fourthly, FSIS must carefully compare the competitors anticipated comments (my anticipation) and those who reverberate his innuendo; thus establishing they are comments collectively identified with a single source.

And lastly, FSIS should withdraw it's proposed unwarranted rulemaking and strongly support it's original rule.

Again, thank you for accepting my late comments due to the fact I have been away form my business and office.

Sincerely,

BFD Corporation



John Shook
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer