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FSIS Docket Clerk  
Food Safety and Inspection Service  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Room 102 Cotton Annex Building  
300 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington D.C. 20250-3700

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pursuing a degree in veterinary medicine and I am currently enrolled in a class that learns about the Food Safety and Inspection Service's (FSIS). I reviewed the Draft Report on the future of the FSIS veterinarians. The two aspects that I found to be most important were the roles that FSIS veterinarians have and the recommendations that will help them perform to their best ability.

The role that the veterinarian plays must meet the challenges of the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HAACP). Today, veterinarian's roles seem unclear because they are perceived to be technicians rather than public health professionals. The overall effectiveness of HAACP is limited to lack of experience and knowledge of all of the levels of FSIS. Veterinarians should have expertise in most aspects of the FSIS needs. But, I know that the most important factor that is lacking is the ability to bring all of the knowledge together. A team comprised of members from the veterinary, microbiology, food science, and any other related field would benefit the FSIS because bringing different knowledge together would allow for less mistakes and happier consumers. In order for the veterinarian to perform the roles that FSIS wants them to, they must clearly define them the responsibilities that they should act upon. This will help to define that the veterinarian serves as a public health professional rather than a technician.

The recommendations that were provided are detailed and long. A major factor and problem that FSIS has with the working veterinarians is the education that they come with. I think that a class provided by FSIS with the information and knowledge that they would like to portray in their employees would definitely help with the inspection practices. The FSIS' recommendations also fall into the category of the roles that

veterinarians have and should represent. I think that the class would be a promising idea because veterinarians might not go directly into working for the FSIS. Veterinarians have the option of working in many different areas such as a large or small animal practice, and research. They might decide to start working for FSIS after 15 years in a small animal hospital. The class would help them understand and focus more on food inspection and it could solve all of the problems with having veterinarians as inspectors.

I hope that my response from the draft report concerning the roles of veterinarians and the recommendations that FSIS provided will help in the future. It is important for meat inspectors to work as team and for a class to be provided for veterinarians working at FSIS. This will help to benefit the overall results from FSIS.

*Sincerely,*  
*Mary Mauldin*