

SMA InfoMeat

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AMS Business Plan Furthers Implementation of NAIS

Last week USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) released a draft Business Plan to further the implementation of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). AMS encourages participants in voluntary marketing programs such as the USDA Process Verified, the Quality Systems Assessment and the Non-Hormone Treated Cattle Programs to meet the inherent animal identification requirements by using NAIS. "The AMS Business Plan will allow for integration of the NAIS with AMS audit-based marketing programs," said Bruce Knight, under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs. "NAIS is a voluntary partnership among producers and government. This immediately provides the producer a twofold reward for a single investment. It ensures trace back of their animals for herd health reasons and provides benefits for marketing value-added animals domestically and internationally." Currently, all AMS partners that have approved marketing programs are actively encouraging the use of premise registration and NAIS compliant animal ID numbers for these program participants. Using NAIS, producers would at the same time meet the requirements for animal identification and traceability for these AMS marketing programs. Further, use of NAIS along with enrollment in these voluntary AMS marketing programs ensures that cattle are eligible for the AMS Export Verification Program for Japan with an opportunity for significant premiums for cattle producers. NAIS would single out product derived from these cattle so that it can be labeled properly when presented for sale at U.S. grocery stores, for American consumers. This helps meet the objectives of the Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) program by identifying the origin of cattle upon arrival at harvest facilities. Contingent upon the publication of a Final Rule implementing COOL for meat and poultry products, AMS and USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will coordinate efforts to develop a COOL "safe harbor" for NAIS participants: packers that rely upon NAIS to determine the origin of their livestock and poultry will subsequently be recognized by the Department as demonstrating compliance with the COOL program's record keeping requirements. Additional information about NAIS is available at www.usda.gov/nais and AMS voluntary marketing programs at www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/arc/audit.htm.

FSIS, CDC, FDA Co-Host Public Health & Food Safety Summit

FSIS is committed to partnering with other food safety and public health communities in an effort to make critical improvements in public health and food safety. FSIS is co-sponsoring a two day summit with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration titled, "Better Communications, Better Public Health Outcomes: Strategies for Improved Coordination During Foodborne Outbreaks," scheduled for May 15 and 16. The meeting will be held at the Renaissance St. Louis Grand and Suites Hotel, 800 Washington Avenue in St. Louis, MO. The summit will include a public meeting and an invitation-only simulation exercise. The steering committee will include representation from member organizations of the Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR), as well as other stakeholders. CIFOR is a multidisciplinary working group whose mission is to increase collaboration across the country to reduce the burden of foodborne illness in the United States. As a member, FSIS recognizes the excellent and important work already being done by CIFOR and plans to continue active participation in future efforts. More information about the summit, including the agenda, will be made available in future issues of the FSIS *Constituent Update*. Also, be sure to check the "Meetings and Events" page of FSIS' website at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Meetings_&_Events/index.asp for more updates.

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FSIS Offers Regulatory Education Session in Missouri



In an effort to reach out to owners and operators of small and very small plants, FSIS will hold a regulatory education workshop in Missouri on April 16, 2008. The workshop will cover a variety of topics and prerequisite programs, including hazard analysis and critical control points, sanitation performance standards, sanitation standard operating procedures, rules of practice, food defense strategies, *E. coli* O157:H7 workshops, and the following notices: 65-07, Notice of Reassessment for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 Control and Completion of a Checklist for all Beef Operations; 66-07, Multiple Follow-Up Sampling After FSIS Positive *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 Results; and 68-07, Routine Sampling and Testing of Raw Ground Beef Components Other Than Trim and Imported Raw Ground Beef Components for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7. The session will be held 6:30 - 8:30 PM at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 2 Convention Center Plaza, Saint Charles, Missouri. To register by phone, call 800-336-3747. Online registration forms and information about upcoming sessions can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp.

APHIS Amends Regulations on Imported Pork Products

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is amending its regulations to allow, under certain conditions, the importation of uncooked pork and pork products processed in regions where classical swine fever (CSF) exist. APHIS is taking this action primarily to allow uncooked pork and pork products that originate in the United States to be processed in Mexico and then returned to the U.S. Under this rule, in order to be eligible for importation into the United States, all uncooked pork and pork products processed in regions where CSF is considered to exist must originate from regions free of CSF. Uncooked pork and pork products that originate from CSF-affected regions cannot be shipped into the United States. To prevent contamination, processing facilities cannot receive any live swine or any pork or pork products from CSF-affected regions and these facilities must be evaluated and approved by APHIS. All shipments to and from CSF-affected regions must be accompanied by a detailed certificate and sent in sealed, serially numbered containers. These and other measures are designed to safeguard U.S. agriculture from CSF. CSF, also known as hog cholera, is a highly contagious viral disease of swine, but does not affect human health. The most common method of transmission is direct contact between healthy swine and those infected with CSF. CSF was eradicated from the U.S. in 1978 after a 16-year effort by the industry, state and federal governments.

USDA Announces Emergency Funding to Eradicate Bovine TB

Last week, USDA announced the availability of \$16.8 million in emergency funding to continue efforts to eradicate bovine tuberculosis in California, Michigan and Minnesota. "Working cooperatively with state animal health agencies and U.S. livestock producers, we have made great strides towards eradicating tuberculosis from the nation's livestock population," said Bruce Knight, under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs. The emergency funding will be used to depopulate known tuberculosis-affected cattle herds, which is crucial to prevent the spread of the disease and to indemnify producers. The funding also will be used for enhanced surveillance not only to identify affected herds but also to determine the source of infection. This enhanced surveillance will include free ranging white-tailed deer in Minnesota and Michigan, a possible source of the disease. While USDA and the States have robust surveillance and control measures in place for tuberculosis, outbreaks of the disease are costly to both producers and the government. Outbreaks also affect domestic animal movement and international trade.

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 <p>Salt Lake City, Utah 1-800-735-6544 www.idahotech.com</p>	<p>Rapidly detect food borne pathogens with our new Food Security System</p> <p>Idaho Technology Inc., developer of the fastest, most accurate pathogen identification systems, introduces our Food Safety System. The system includes the R.A.P.I.D.® LT, a real-time PCR instrument, interpretive software, and freeze-dried assays for Listeria, Salmonella, E. coli, Avian Influenza and Campylobacter. The Idaho Technology Food Safety System provides results in less than 45 minutes, allowing food producers to act quickly if there is a problem. The system also allows food producers to continue processing food products faster, saving resources and cutting costs. The system is days faster than traditional testing methods and is easily adaptable to multiple food sample matrices. Flexibility, coupled with speed and accuracy, makes the R.A.P.I.D. LT system ideal for rapid pathogen identification in the food industry.</p> <p>For more information, please visit our website at www.idahotech.com or email melissa_tucker@idahotech.com.</p>



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InfoMeat will not be published next Monday. Look for our next issue on Tuesday, April 15!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW



to attend SMA's 52nd Annual Convention & Suppliers' Showcase, July 16-19, 2008 at the Camelback Inn in Scottsdale, AZ!

Hotel reservations are available by calling **480-948-1700** or accessing the link on our website at southwestmeat.org!

Briefly . . .

Koohmaraie Joins IEH Laboratories and Consulting Group: Last week IEH Laboratories and Consulting Group announced the appointment of Dr. Mohammad Koohmaraie as CEO of its Meat Division, effective April 16, 2008. Prior to joining IEH, Dr. Koohmaraie was with USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) for 24 years. Since September 2005 he was the Director of the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC), responsible for directing research and operation of the USMARC. Throughout his career, Dr. Koohmaraie has focused his research efforts on the biological mechanisms regulating meat tenderness, as well as leading and conducting research projects to help the meat industry reduce/eliminate *E. coli* O157:H7. He works closely with the members of meat industry to design projects to address food safety problems relevant to the industry. "We are excited to have Dr. Koohmaraie on our team," said Mansour Samadpour, President and founder of IEH. "He will bring a wealth of experience to IEH and combined with our existing team it will enable IEH to better serve our partners in the food industry."

Associations Sponsor Best Hiring Practices Seminar: SMA has joined NMA, and the AMI Foundation in hosting a program on Best Hiring Practices. The program is designed to address the laws and regulations related to hiring practices, outline employers' compliance obligations, and review the E-Verify program, among other topics. It will be held today, April 7 at the DePaul University-O'Hare Campus in Des Plaines, IL, and Tuesday, April 8, 2008 at the Hilton Kansas City Airport in Kansas City, MO. Registration is \$150 for members. For registration info, visit www.meatami.com and click on Events/Education or email phyllis@southwestmeat.org.

FSIS Posts Guidance on Requesting Regulatory Waiver for New Technology: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) recently issued guidance on requesting a waiver of food safety and FSIS regulatory requirements for the use of new technology. The guidance document informs meat and poultry establishments, egg product plants, companies that manufacture and sell technology to official establishments, and other interested persons of the procedures for obtaining a regulatory waiver for a limited period of time to test new technologies. The guidance document is available online at www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/op/technology/New_Technology_Waiver.pdf.

FSIS Posts Agenda for Public Meeting on *E. coli*: FSIS has posted the agenda for this week's public meeting to discuss challenges and proposed solutions in moving forward to address recalls and illnesses related to *E. coli* O157:H7. The agenda is available at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Agenda_Ecoli_040908/index.asp. Members who cannot attend in person may audit via conference call by calling 1-888-456-0321; you must give the Participant Passcode, which is: ECOLI and the leader's name: Al Almanza.