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Email: phyllis@southwestmeat.org
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Edited by Phyllis Zimmerman

USDA, FDA, CDC Collaborate on Food Defense Kit

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have launched a food defense awareness training kit for first line food industry employees. The FIRST kit uses five key points based on the acronym: follow company food defense plans and procedures; inspect your work area and surrounding areas; recognize anything out of the ordinary; secure all ingredients, supplies and finished product; and tell management if you notice anything unusual or suspicious. The kit is free to employees and comes with a DVD, training poster and on-screen instructions. It can be ordered only from the website at: www.cfsan.fda.gov/fooddefense. The FDA also has an ALERT training kit to raise awareness of food defense issues and to decrease the risk of food contamination. ALERT stands for assure the supplies and ingredients are from safe and secure sources; look after the security of the products and ingredients; know your employees; provide reports about the security of products; and know whom to notify if there is a threat.

GIPSA Meetings Discuss Farm Bill on Swine, Poultry Industries

USDA's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) will hold three Town Hall meetings on implementation of the 2008 Farm Bill during which members of the public can provide comments and recommendations related to the swine and poultry industries. GIPSA will use comments and recommendations to write the regulations needed to implement sections 11005 and 11006 of the 2008 Farm Bill. Attendees should be prepared to discuss the specific provisions, the problems Congress means to address through the Farm Bill and possible regulatory solutions that would correct those problems, as well as the potential benefits and costs of their recommendations. The meetings will run from 6 to 8 PM each day. Dates and locations are:

- October 14 - Crawford County Cooperative Extension Office, 105 Pointer Trail West, Van Buren, AR 72956
- October 16 - Iowa State University Scheman Building, Room 275, 1810 Lincoln Way, Ames, IA 50010
- October 22 - Hall County FSA Building; 734 East Crescent Drive, Gainesville, GA 30501

Those unable to attend the meetings may comment via an audio bridge by calling 870-950-5739; the participant pass code is 6969173#. During the meeting, you can send questions or comments to Jeana.M.Harbison@usda.gov.

Senators Propose Law for Procedures in Immigration Raids

Senators Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ) are sponsoring of a bill called the "Protect Citizens and Residents from Unlawful Raids and Detention Act," which the senators said would protect the rights of U.S. citizens and legal residents who are caught up in immigration raids by federal authorities. Introduced on September 25, the act pushes for more stringent legal procedures to be followed by authorities who execute immigration-related searches and warrants. In recent months, immigration officials have conducted numerous workplace raids throughout the country. Both lawmakers argue the raids often net lawful residents. Workers who can't produce papers, such as a birth certificate or passport proving U.S. citizenship or legal residency, are often detained. Under the proposed legislation, immigration agents must advise workers being detained of their rights, including the option of remaining silent or seeking legal counsel. "We cannot allow the fervor to deport undocumented workers to take away the constitutional rights that belong to each and every U.S. citizen and legal resident," said Menendez.

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Nanotechnology Improves Food Safety by Detecting Prions

Bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) is a fatal neurodegenerative condition in cattle that is related to the human form of a disease that has caused the deaths of nearly 200 people worldwide. Currently, testing for this disease in cattle is a lengthy process that only occasionally results in a correct diagnosis. With funding from USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) National Research Initiative (NRI), scientists in New York created a new device that may provide a faster, easier, and more reliable way to test for BSE. This new tool targets prions, which are believed to be the cause of BSE. Prions are abnormally structured proteins that convert normal proteins into an abnormal form. Prions are responsible for forms of the neurodegenerative diseases, such as BSE in cattle, scrapie in sheep, and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans. It often takes years before the symptoms arise that indicate the disease is present. There are no rapid tests available to test for the presence of prions in cattle. The only test currently available for BSE involves multiple steps, requires sacrificing an animal host, and takes time. Looking for a better method of prion detection, Harold Craighead and colleagues at Cornell University have developed nanoscale resonators, which are tiny devices that function like tuning forks by changing pitch with increased mass. Craighead's group, in collaboration with Richard Montagna at Innovative Biotechnologies International, Inc., modeled the device after a similar idea used to detect bacterial pathogens. When prions bind to the resonator's silicon sensor, it changes the vibrational resonant frequency of the device. In experimental trials, the sensor detected prions at concentrations as low as two nanograms per milliliter, the smallest levels measured to date. Currently, the resonator only detects prions in a saline solution. Efforts are now underway to use the resonator to detect prions in more complex solutions, such as blood. "The real challenge is going to be to build an automated device that can take blood from a cow in the field and give a rapid response as to whether prions are present," Craighead said. "At the moment we only test cows when they fall over, but that is a late stage of the disease. It would be ideal to test cows a lot earlier. Resonators could be one path to doing this." Scientists hope the new device will soon be used to detect prions in food items to ensure food safety and quality for the national food supply.

ITC Report: BSE Cost \$11 Billion in Revenue

According to a government report issued last Tuesday, U.S. ranchers and processors lost almost \$11 billion in revenue between 2004 and 2007 after major importers banned U.S. beef following the discovery of BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy) in the United States. The International Trade Commission said trade restrictions put in place because of BSE cost the U.S. beef industry between \$1.5 billion and \$2.7 billion in annual revenue between 2004 and 2007. Japan and Korea were responsible for \$9.4 billion of the \$11 billion estimated in total lost revenue. Beef shipments from the United States were virtually halted after it found its first case of the disease in December 2003 in Washington state. Global U.S. beef sales have been edging higher, but not quickly enough for the Bush administration, or for the beef industry, which complain of age restrictions and inflexible import rules. The ITC said that while governments will immediately close their borders when food safety concerns arise, it can take several years before the restrictions are lifted. "The U.S. (BSE) incident provides an example of this imbalance between imposing and relaxing trade restrictions," the ITC said in a 279-page report. U.S. officials had hoped a decision last year by the World Organization for Animal Health, which gave the United States a "controlled risk" status for beef safety, would boost beef exports significantly, but it has been slow going. USDA and others have encouraged trading partners to adopt international beef guidelines by accepting U.S. bone-in beef and meats from cattle of all ages. (Christopher Doering, Reuters, 10/7/08)

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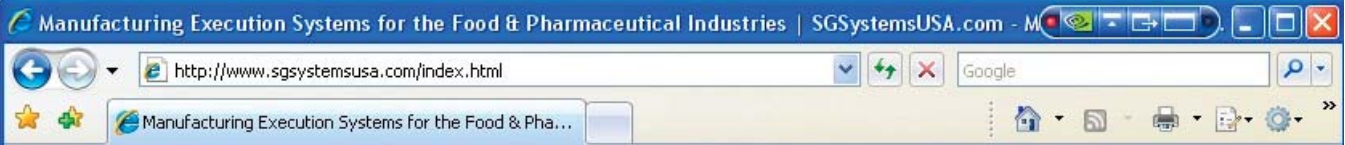
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LATEST NEWS

Summer '08

SG Systems has had a very busy summer full of growth and opportunity. More...

March '08



Come and visit us at stand #145 at Baking Tech 2008, Chicago. (March 2nd-4th)

January '08

Personnel announcements: SG Systems USA would like to introduce Stuart Hunt as the newest addition to our team. More...

December '07

SG Systems, LLC and our UK



POSITION AVAILABLE
Southside Market & BBQ, Inc.
 is looking for a **Plant Manager**.

This key position offers a competitive compensation and benefits package. Job duties include managing all plant operations. Qualified candidates will have 5+ years experience, preferably in sausage production, be HACCP certified and bilingual, and possess strong leadership and computer skills with experience in personnel and budget management, scheduling, new product development, and production efficiency improvements. To apply for this position, please send a cover letter and resume to:
dmanhart@southsidemarket.com

**Does Your HACCP Plan Need An Update?
 Are You Ready for an FSIS EIAO Review?**

Register now for “Beyond Basics: HACCP Plan Improvement Workshop for Raw and Cooked Product Operations,” hosted by SMA, NMA, and the TAMU Department of Animal Science, **November 6-7, 2008** at Texas A&M University.

This workshop will provide a review and evaluation of your company’s HACCP plan, with hands-on help to improve it. Workshop topics will include: flow chart review & evaluation, review and scientific support of hazard analysis, defending the selection of CCPs, supporting monitoring and verification frequencies, HACCP plan validation schemes, compiling decision making & supporting documentation. Registration information and course outline are available on our website.
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Briefly . . .

Free Web Seminar on Controlling *Listeria* Offered: The University of Nebraska along with its collaborating partners, Colorado State University, Cornell University, Kansas State University and Ohio State University, is conducting a series of free web seminars to inform and educate the RTE meat and poultry processors on various aspects of controlling *Listeria* in the RTE processing environment and on the product. The web-seminar is designed to help small and very small RTE meat and poultry businesses to address *Listeria* in their RTE environment and ways to reduce the *Listeria* risk in their products. The seminar series is funded through a grant from the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative of the CSREES, USDA. The next session is scheduled for October 15, 2008 from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM (CST). Those interested can participate by logging in at the following website: **<http://connect.extension.iastate.edu/nebraska/>**. To receive notifications and presentation materials ahead of the web seminar, please register by sending an e-mail to Nina Murray at nmurray2@unl.edu with your name and e-mail.

Transcripts Available for Public Meeting on Low Dose Irradiation in Beef: FSIS held a public meeting September 18 to communicate with stakeholders and to receive public comments on what action it should take with respect to a petition from the American Meat Institute (AMI) in July 2005. The petition called for the Agency to recognize the use of low penetration and low dose electron beam irradiation on the surface of chilled beef carcasses as a processing aid. Transcripts from this meeting are now available on FSIS’ website at **www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/2008_Notices_Index/index.asp** for review.

FSIS Amends Safe Ingredients List: The USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) has published an amendment to its FSIS Directive 7120.1, “Safe and Suitable Ingredients Used in the Production of Meat and Poultry Products.” This is Amendment 16. It may be viewed at: **www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISDirectives/7120.1Amend16.pdf**. Substances added since the 7/22/2008 issuance of the directive are in bold.

USDA Increases Membership on Cattlemen’s Beef Promotion Board: The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is increasing the Cattlemen’s Beef Promotion and Research Board (Board) membership from 104 to 106 members. The increase is due to changes in cattle inventories since the last board reapportionment in 2005. The board helps to strengthen the beef industry’s position in the marketplace as well as maintain and expand domestic and foreign markets’ uses for beef and beef products. The revised membership will be effective with nominations in 2008 for appointments that will be effective early in 2009.