

SMA *InfoMeat*

January 27, 2003
Volume 13, Issue 4

Email: sma@tca.net
Internet website: <http://www.southwestmeat.org>

Edited by Phyllis Zimmerman

Bush to Strengthen USDA's Food Safety Budget

President Bush will seek record-level support for USDA's meat and poultry food safety programs as well as increase efforts to strengthen agricultural protection systems in his FY 2004 budget, Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman announced last week. In a speech to the U.S. poultry industry in Atlanta, Veneman explained that USDA's food safety budget will increase to \$797 million, an increase of \$42 million over the FY 2003 request, representing a \$148 million (20%) increase in food safety programs since FY 2000. The budget boost will fund 7,680 food safety inspectors, provide specialized training for the inspection workforce, increase microbiological testing and sampling, and increase public education efforts. More funding will also be available for APHIS programs for inspections, vaccines, and expansion of diagnostic and other scientific and technical services, as well as for strengthening laboratory security measures, conducting additional research on emerging animal diseases, new vaccine development, new biosecurity database systems, and continued development of the unified Federal-State Diagnostic Network for identifying and responding to high-risk biological pathogens. "The President cares about ensuring a strong food safety system and the protection of agriculture against potential threats," said Veneman. "This additional funding continues to build upon a strong record of achievement in strengthening our production systems to ensure the integrity of our food systems." According to Dr. Elsa Murano, undersecretary for food safety, the additional FSIS inspectors will be added at all inspection levels. They will be used to enhance the current inspection program as well as strengthen the agency's ability to inspect cold storage facilities. USDA's budget will also include \$70 million in new funding through other USDA programs to strengthen agricultural protection systems.

APHIS Seeks Comments on Proposed Downer, Dead Stock Rule

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has issued an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to help develop approaches to control the risk that dead stock and non-ambulatory animals could pose to the spread of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), should it occur in the United States. Several issues open for comment on the ANPR include: What is the preferred approach and associated costs to affected parties for controlling risks associated with disposal of non-ambulatory and dead livestock? Are there any cross-cutting issues between safe disposal of specified risk materials such as brain and spinal cord and safe disposal options for downer and on-farm dead animals? Are there practical ways to cull higher risk downer cattle, such as cattle that may have a non-obvious neurological condition, before they are sent to slaughter? How should risk factors such as age, physical condition, and the source and type of cattle be considered when sending downer cattle to slaughter? What would such culling cost affected parties? Can rendering be an effective means for safely disposing of dead stock in a manner that minimizes risks of spreading BSE and other animal diseases and under what conditions? What are the associated technical, economic, regional, environmental, and practical business issues? Is there a need to particularly address disposal of sheep and goats with regard to scrapie and disposal of captive elk and deer with regard to CWD? What dead stock disposal issues are common to all species, and what issues are of particular importance to different types of producers? APHIS is considering all comments received by March 24. By mail, send an original and three copies of comments to: Regulatory Analysis and Development PPD, APHIS Station 3C71 4700 River Rd. Unit 118, Riverdale, MD 20737-1231, or e-mail comments, with reference to Docket No. 01-068-1, to regulations@aphis.usda.gov. The complete Federal Register notice is available online at www.regulations.gov/freddocs/03-01210.htm.

S O U T H W E S T M E A T A S S O C I A T I O N
4103 SOUTH TEXAS AVENUE, SUITE 101 • BRYAN, TX 77802 • (979) 846-9011 • FAX (979) 846-8198

DAN MAR CO.

Innovators in Red Meat Product Safety and Distributors of:

ACIDIFIED SODIUM CHLORITE • PRESERVATIVES • INDUSTRIAL SANITATION

PRODUCTS AND SYSTEMS

Acidified Sodium Chlorite uses include:

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Post-Evisceration Sprays | Food Spoilage Bacteria Control |
| Pre-Fabrication Spray | D-2 Sanitizer Plant Wide |
| Parts and Trim Spray | P-1 Sanitizer Plant Wide |
| Comminuted Parts Mist | Odor Control in Kill Plants |

Effective against E. coli, Salmonella, and Listeria

- **Technical, Regulatory, and Efficacy Support**
- **Authorized distributor of near-pharmaceutical grade sodium chlorite in Texas & the U.S.**
- **Success stories established in processing facilities as large as 4000 head per day to 50 head per day!**

Paul Edwards

Sales: 817- 822-5767

Fax: 817-263-4337

Email: danmarco@flash.net

Proud Member of SMA, providing service to all 5 states

Mexican Poultry Exports to Continue with Tariff Rate Quota

USDA and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative announced last Friday that they have successfully worked to continue U.S. poultry exports to Mexico with preferential access, preventing possible Mexican action that could cause significant trade disruption. On January 1, under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Mexican tariffs on U.S. poultry exports fell to zero. Under NAFTA, Mexico could have imposed a "safeguard" or emergency import tariff of up to 240 percent on U.S. poultry exports, which is the tariff that countries without a preferential arrangement with Mexico pay. Instead, Mexico will allow 50,000 metric tons of U.S. chicken leg quarters into Mexico duty-free over the next six months and will impose a temporary, or provisional, safeguard tariff of 98.8 percent on imports of chicken leg quarters above that level. All other U.S. poultry exports will continue to enter Mexico duty free. The provisional measure will take the form of a tariff-rate quota (TRQ). Mexico's most-favored-nation (MFN) tariff rate for U.S. chicken leg quarters is 240 percent. Citing "critical circumstances," Mexico has decided to impose the provisional measure for six months, effective immediately, while its full safeguard investigation continues. The United States will continue to work with Mexico on a long term measure, which under NAFTA rules would require Mexico to provide offsetting trade compensation. Meanwhile, Mexico's Agriculture Ministry recently banned poultry and egg imports from California and Nevada, where Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) virus has been detected. Mexico will also ban poultry imports from Arizona, Idaho, Oregon and Utah, until their END status is determined.

Position Available



K-Klean, a brand of WestAgro and a longtime SMA member, is seeking individuals for Field Sales & Service positions. Competitive Pay & Benefits. Interested individuals with processing or sales backgrounds should contact Rick Kimbrell. MB. (214) 460-4344.



Register now for

"Developing & Implementing HACCP Plans for the Meat Industry"

to be held at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas, **March 25-27, 2003**, hosted by SMA and the Texas A&M Department of Animal Science. Registration forms are available on our website, or by contacting the SMA office.

Sign up today!

Smithfield Defeats Iowa Packer Ban

Last week, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Iowa ruled in favor of Smithfield Foods Inc., striking down Iowa's law banning meat packers' ability to own or control livestock as an unconstitutional infringement on interstate commerce. Smithfield's lawsuit was the first constitutional challenge to Iowa's corporate farm law, which was passed in 1975, amended in 1988 and then amended again last year to ban packer financing of livestock operations. The Iowa packer ban "unconstitutionally discriminates against out-of-state interests in favor of local ones," Judge Robert Pratt wrote in his opinion. Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller said his office plans to appeal the decision. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), who has been one of the strongest advocates in Congress on behalf of a national ban, said he was "disappointed that the state's ban on the packer ownership of livestock was not upheld." He said the ruling will place "an even stronger emphasis on the urgent need for Congress to pass and the President to sign a nation-wide ban on the packer ownership of livestock." However, support for a national packer ban may not be as strong as it once was. Delegates at the American Farm Bureau Federation's annual meeting in Tampa, Florida last week voted against policy that called for a prohibition of "packer ownership of livestock for more than 14 days prior to slaughter" except in certain circumstances. Instead, delegates recommended that AFBF establish a task force to examine the impact to agriculture of a ban on packer ownership of livestock and encouraged the Agriculture Department, in conjunction with the Justice Department, to "closely investigate all mergers, ownership changes or other trends in the meat packing industry for actions that limit the availability of a competitive market for livestock producers."

Briefly . . .

Government Launches Website for Public Comment on Federal Documents: The Bush Administration this week introduced a web site that allows citizens to find, review and submit comments on federal documents open for comment and published in the *Federal Register*. Regulations.gov is part of the President's Management Agenda to make it easier for citizens and businesses to interact with the government. Visit the web site at www.regulations.gov.

Japan Confirms More BSE Cases: Last week, officials in Japan confirmed the sixth and seventh instances of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease. Japanese Health Ministry officials said Thursday tests on a dead cow's brain and spinal cord showed the animal had been infected with BSE. This comes three days after another case of mad cow disease was confirmed. Health Ministry officials quarantined cattle on the farms involved to confine any possible spread of the disease. Officials will begin to examine surviving cows on the farms along with a check on their feed to try to trace the source and route of infection.

NCBA Offers Beef Value Cuts Resources: Through the efforts of the beef checkoff-funded R&D Ranch® team at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), beef industry professionals are now able to access the most in-depth Beef Value Cuts resources available. The Beef Value Cuts Guide includes an instruction manual, brochure, a VHS training video, and a comprehensive CD-ROM and multi-tab three ring binder. The Guide provides a complete turnkey program with several tools designed to make it easy for processors, manufacturers, retailers and foodservice operators to understand and implement new single muscle cuts from the chuck and round. For information and ordering instructions, visit the NCBA website at www.beef.org or contact the NCBA Customer Service Department at 800-368-3138.

E. coli O157:H7 Sampling Program for Raw Ground Beef Yields First Positive for CY 2003: A confirmed positive for *E. coli* O157:H7 was reported from a raw ground beef sample taken on January 9 at a federal establishment in Pennsylvania. All product was held at the establishment. This brings the number of confirmed positives in CY 2003 to one out of more than 330 samples and 200 overall out of more than 54,000 samples since FSIS began the sampling program in 1994. Access this information on FSIS' Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/OPHS/ecoltest/ecpositives.htm.

Time Is Running Out to Sign Up for Beyond Basics: HACCP Plan Improvement Workshop for Cooked Product Operations

hosted by SMA, NMA, and the Texas A&M University Department of Animal Science, **February 4-5, 2003**,
Memorial Student Center, Room 292A, at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas.

**Registration information is available on our website, or contact the SMA office.
Don't miss this chance to fine-tune your HACCP plan with expert help! Register today!**