

SMA *InfoMeat*

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Edited by Phyllis Zimmerman

Supreme Court Strikes Down Mushroom Checkoff

Last Monday the United States Supreme Court ruled that the mushroom industry's mandatory checkoff program violates the First Amendment guarantee of free speech. The ruling could have major implications for numerous USDA-administered, producer-funded checkoff programs. The justices ruled 6 to 3 that the mandatory assessments forced mushroom producer United Foods, Inc. to pay for ads that benefitted its competitors. "Just as the First Amendment may prevent the government from prohibiting speech, the amendment may prevent the government from compelling individuals to express certain views," Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote for the majority. The court has previously ruled that checkoff advertisements are constitutional in heavily regulated industries such as California fruit production, but Justice Kennedy said the mushroom checkoff is different because the mushroom market is less regulated and mushroom producers do not cooperate the way fruit producers do. Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman said that USDA is reviewing the Court's ruling to determine what actions to take with respect to the Mushroom Research and Promotion Program. "USDA generally regards promotion activities conducted under federal marketing agreement and order programs and federal research and promotion programs to be effective tools for market enhancement. USDA continues to believe that national commodity research and promotion programs offer opportunities to maintain, develop and expand markets for agricultural products both at home and abroad," she said. Although the anti-checkoff Campaign for Family Farms was quick to claim victory, supporters of promotional programs were quick to point out differences in agriculture industries. "The Mushroom Program is as different from the beef checkoff as the mushroom industry is from the beef industry," said Dan Hammond of the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board. He pointed out that the mushroom assessment is paid by handlers, whereas the beef checkoff is paid by producers, each of whom stand to benefit from an increase in beef demand. Also, the beef industry is federally regulated by the inspection system, the beef grading system, and the Packers and Stockyards Administration. In determining the constitutionality of other checkoff programs, it is likely that each case would be judged by the amount of cohesion and regulation in each industry.

Burger King Adopts Strict Animal Welfare Requirements

The Burger King Corporation announced last week that it has adopted strict guidelines and audits for the humane handling of food animals and it has petitioned the USDA to enforce the federal Humane Slaughter Act. The new guidelines will require suppliers to adhere to the strictest standards in the industry in the care, housing, transport and slaughter of swine, cattle and poultry. The animal handling verification guidelines for all cattle and swine slaughterhouses will be based on the American Meat Institute's (AMI) Audit Program and the verification guidelines for poultry slaughtering facilities will be based on the National Chicken Council's (NCC) guidelines. The corporation plans to enforce the new guidelines through a series of announced and unannounced audits at supplier plants, beginning as early as October 31, 2001 and to be completed by June 30, 2002. Beginning in August of 2002, Burger King will have Colorado State's Dr. Temple Grandin, a noted animal handling authority, conducting unannounced audits to ensure supplier compliance. The company also plans to monitor developments in the areas of genetics, thermal comfort of animals, air quality in enclosed animal environments, and other science-based improvements in food animal handling. Beginning July 1, 2002, Burger King will publish an annual report on the Handling of Food Animals for the Burger King System and will make the report available on their new animal handling website.

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

FSIS to Host Meetings

As part of its ongoing "HACCP: The Next Steps" initiative, the Food Safety and Inspection Service will be conducting work unit meetings with its Consumer Safety Inspectors and Veterinary Medical Officers. In these sessions, they will review Pathogen Reduction/ HACCP requirements, agency verification methodology and risk-based program design issues. These sessions will be held at various locations within each district and will include joint sessions in the afternoons with industry and agency personnel. Additionally, at each location, there will be an evening "town hall" session to which industry is also invited. Each district office is coordinating the specific meeting details. In the Dallas district, meetings will be held beginning July 9 and continuing through September 14. In the Springdale district, they will run from July 17 through September 12. Check with your local IIC or District Office to receive more details on times and locations near you.

USDA Launches Website on Food Safety Research Projects

The USDA today launched a new website (www.nal.usda.gov/fsrio) aimed at providing a database of food safety research projects to the research community and the general public. The site provides detailed information on food safety research projects, spending, and accomplishments by U.S. Federal agencies, along with links to other important food safety research information. "This Website is a tool that researchers and policy makers can use to examine research needs and priorities in food safety," said Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman. "The goal is to measure the progress of our food safety research and continue efforts to educate the public about these important issues." The searchable database provides information on nearly 500 food safety research projects dating from 1998 to the present including research done or funded by: Agricultural Research Service; USDA Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; the Food Safety Consortium; and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Food and Drug Administration. It also includes program and planning information, various food safety reports, food safety news and information, and over 100 links to web-based food safety research information provided by U.S. and foreign governments and educational and professional organizations.

2001 Meat and Poultry Sausage School Slated for August

The 2001 Meat and Poultry Sausage School, originally scheduled for last May, has been rescheduled for August 28 - 30 at the Rosenthal Meat Science and Technology Center on the Texas A&M University campus. The three day course will include hands-on laboratory experiences, product evaluation sessions, and demonstrations covering smoked sausage, dried and semi-dried sausage, meat and poultry emulsions, and processing technology. Industry leaders in processed meats will also be on-hand to lead several sessions. For course information, contact Dan Hale or Davey Griffin at 979-845-0435 or visit the Sausage School web site at <http://meat.tamu.edu/training/sauschool.html> for a schedule of events. This workshop is conducted by the Meat Science Section at Texas A&M University in cooperation with the Southwest Meat Association. Registration forms (see pages 4-6) are also available by contacting the SMA office. The course is limited to 40 participants, so register early!

HURRY!
Send in your
Convention
registration
today!
**Hotel reservation
deadline is TODAY!**
Register and make your
hotel reservations now to
attend "MOOving into a
New Century," our 45th
Annual Convention and
Suppliers' Showcase,
July 18-21, 2001 at the
Westin La Cantera Resort
in San Antonio, Texas.
Call 210-558-6500 today!
Registration packets are
available on our website or
by calling the SMA office.
Contact us if you have any
registration questions

Sign up now for "Developing & Implementing HACCP Plans for the Meat Industry"

to be held at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas,
July 31 - August 2, 2001, 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. Hotel registration
deadline in July 17th. **Sign up today!**

Consumer Activists File Suit Against SureBeam

The Center for Food Safety and Public Citizen, two consumer activist groups, have filed a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) against the SureBeam Corporation for false advertising. The suit stems from the company's use of the phrase "electronically pasteurized" in its Internet advertising for the e-beam method of food irradiation, which uses commercial electricity rather than gamma radiation. Public Citizen, Ralph Nader's consumer watchdog group, has opposed food irradiation since its approval by the USDA in February, 2000 and this complaint is its fourth. Previous complaints were filed with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) against Huisken Meats, one of the first red meat companies to market irradiated ground beef patties, and with the FTC against Omaha Steaks, regarding their failure to disclose that their beef patties were irradiated. Wil Williams, SureBeam vice president of corporate communications responded to the groups' claims as absolute nonsense and said that Public Citizen is fighting a semantic, not a scientific battle. "Pasteurization means the partial sterilization of a [food] product so as to remove dangerous and lethal bacteria," Williams said. "That is the dictionary definition, and that is what the USDA follows. Public Citizen wants us to narrowly define [meat pasteurization] into the same sense as milk pasteurization because they know that words, by their nature, tend to frighten people." Williams believes that Public Citizen objects to the statement "irradiated for safety" because they don't want anything that informs the consumer this process is being used to stop the spread of foodborne disease.

Briefly . . .

FSIS Reopens Comment Period for Proposed RTE Meats Regulations: In response to several requests from meat and poultry trade groups, including SMA, the Food Safety and Inspection Service is reopening the comment period on the proposed regulations concerning ready-to-eat and partially heat-treated meat and poultry products. The period for comments will be extended until September 10, 2001.

Tyson, IBP Agree on Merger Terms: Tyson Foods, Inc. and IBP, Inc. have agreed on merger terms, creating the largest meat company in the U.S. Tyson will acquire IBP for \$2.7 billion in cash and stock, about 16% less than their original agreement. Tyson will purchase half the shares at \$30 per share through a tender offer, and the remainder of shares will be exchanged at 2.381 Tyson shares per IBP share. Today Tyson announced that IBP's Robert Peterson, chairman and CEO, and Richard Bond, COO and president, will be joining Tyson's Board of Directors.

FSIS Makes New Publications Available on Website: FSIS is releasing its third edition of the Microbiology Laboratory Guidelines (MLG) containing current protocols for analyzing tests required by the agency on meat, poultry, and egg products. Access the MLG at: www.fsis.usda.gov/OPHS/microlab/mlgbook.htm. The latest edition of Food Safety Educator is also now available, focusing on "Chill!," one of the four key components of the "Fight BAC!" campaign. Access the Food Safety Educator at: www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/educator/educator6-2a.htm.

Tyson Employee Shoots Shift Supervisor: An employee at a Jackson, Mississippi Tyson Foods plant allegedly shot his shift supervisor in the leg and neck after becoming upset after a counseling session. Frederick Russell, 29, remains in custody on aggravated assault charges. Steven Bell, 40, is in stable condition at a local hospital.

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processing industry*

Office Holiday

The SMA
Office will be closed
Wednesday, July 4th
in observance of
Independence
Day.



Have a Safe and Happy Fourth!

Sausage School "Meat and Poultry"

August 28-30, 2001

Tuesday-Thursday

College Station, Texas

Texas A&M University

Rosenthal Meat Science and
Technology Center

Program Hosts



Page 2 Sausage School Schedule
Page 3 Registration Form

The Conference Hotel is the Hampton Inn (979) 846-0184. More details on page 3.

Program Sponsors



Program Sponsors



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Guest Speakers

Jimmy Keeton
Texas A&M University,
Casey B. Frye
Burke Corporation,
Fred Ray
Oklahoma State Univ.,
John Southerland
Kettle Cooked Foods,
Gary Acuff
Texas A&M University,
Kerri Harris
Texas A&M University



Sausage School **"Meat and Poultry"**

August 28-30, 2001

College Station, Texas
Texas A&M University



Rosenthal Meat Science and Technology Center

Tentative Schedule

Day 1 - August 28, 2001, Tuesday

12:45pm Van leaves the Hampton Inn for Rosenthal Meat Science and Technology Center

1:00pm Welcome

Raw Meat Ingredients Qualitative and Safety Considerations - Fred Ray

Binding, Water Holding Capacity, Color, and Condition

Low Cost Meats, Advanced Meat Recovery, and Poultry - Fred Ray

Non-Meat Ingredients and Chemistry of Meat and Non-meat Interactions -

Casey Frye

Quality Control for Seasoning and Flavors - Heller

Smoked Sausage Processing Laboratory

Equipment Considerations Stuffing and Linking - RiscoUSA

6:00pm Dinner

7:00pm Adjourn Van returns to the Hotel

Day 2 - August 29, 2001, Wednesday

7:45am Van leaves the Hampton Inn for Rosenthal Meat Science Center

8:00am Reduced Fat Sausage Production -

Liquid Smoke Applications- Red Arrow

Artificial Casings- Devro-Teepak

Natural Casings-Deweid

Starter Cultures and Fermented Sausage Demonstration

Meat and Poultry Emulsion Technology

Equipment Consideration for Sausage Manufacturing, Mixing, Grinding, Blending,

Emulsifiers and Packaging - Reiser

Meat Emulsion Laboratory

12:00 noon Lunch

Sausage Processing Laboratory: Part 2

Thermal Processing and Smokehouse Management - Schedules - Alkar

Considerations for Post-Packaging Pasteurization - Alkar

5:30pm Dinner

6:30pm Adjourn Van returns to the Hotel

Day 3 - August 30, Thursday

7:45am Van leaves the Hampton Inn for Rosenthal Meat Science Center

8:00am Microbiology **Concerns of RTE Foods - Gary Acuff**

In Plant RTE Food Safety and Sanitation Considerations - John Southerland

HACCP Update for RTE Meat and Poultry Products - Kerris Harris

Sensory and Product Evaluation

Trouble Shooting Defects Panel

12:00 noon Lunch

1:30pm Adjourn and van returns to Hotel

2001 Sausage School "Meat and Poultry" Registration Form

Registration Form

(Reg. Deadline August 21, 2001)

Sausage School
August 28-30, 2001

Return this form to SMA,

4103 South Texas Ave., Suite 101, Bryan, Texas 77802

Fax (979) 846-8198

SMA Phone

(979) 846-9011

Registration includes lecture and laboratory materials, notebook, other course costs, meals and ground transportation at TAMU.

_____ I plan to attend the Sausage School

Registration Fee \$495.00 Complimentary

(You can pay by Credit Card or a Check Payable to the Southwest Meat Association)

Name (first)	Last	Nickname
Company Name	E-Mail	
Company Address		
City	State	Zip
Phone Number	Fax Number	
Pay by Check _____ I have enclosed a check in the amount of \$495.00 with this registration form. Please make checks payable to the Southwest Meat Association.		
Or Pay By Credit Card Persons name as it appears on the card _____		
Card Number _____	Visa or Master Card (circle one)	
Expiration Date _____	Signature _____	
_____ I will be staying at the Hampton Inn while at TAMU		

Information

Sausage School Format

This course will include hands-on, problem solving, and show and tell demonstrations. The course will have lecture and laboratory sections.

Hotel

The Hampton Inn has been designated as the conference hotel at a rate of \$62.00 plus tax. Reservations may be made by calling (979) 846-0184. Please indicate that you are with the Sausage School. The Hampton Inn is located on Texas Avenue near the intersection of University Drive and Texas Avenue. Rooms will be held at this rate until August 14, 2001.

Workshop Cancellation Policy and Refund

100% If you cancel prior to August 24, 2001 5:00pm
0% After August 24, 2001 5:00pm

Substitutes welcomed at any time

Maximum Enrollment

The Sausage School is limited to 40 people and is on a first come first served basis.

Ground Transportation

A bus will be available to transport you from the hotel to the conference site. The participants are requested to use the bus while traveling to and from workshop activities.

Dress

Please dress casually and comfortably. The attendees will be working in an environment less than 50°F; therefore, bring warm clothes for the laboratory portions of the course.

More Information and Questions

Call Dan Hale or Davey Griffin at (979) 845-0435, 348 Kleberg Center, TAMU, College Station, Texas, 77843-2471

Fax (979) 845-9454, email dsh0668@acs.tamu.edu