

Briefing

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection August 8-9, 2007

Strategic Implementation Plan for Enhancing Outreach to Small and Very Small Plants

Purpose

This briefing paper is an update for the Committee on the status of the Strategic Implementation Plan for Enhancing Outreach to Small and Very Small Plants.

Discussion

FSIS presented the plan to the Committee in May 2006. Subcommittee number 2 reviewed the plan in detail, and recommended that the Agency move forward with the plan. FSIS has put the plan into action. In October 2006, FSIS provided an update to the Committee. Following are highlights of the accomplishments.

- Established a one-stop service to respond to technical questions from small and very small plants (toll free number 1-800-233-3935 or email techcenter@fsis.usda.gov).
- Issued guidance in plain language on the appeals process to help small and very small plant owners and operators understand how to appeal an inspection decision.
- Established ongoing Regulatory Education Sessions that bring industry and inspection personnel together to hear a common message about the regulations. FSIS announces these sessions through the *Constituent Update* and on the FSIS web site at:
http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp.
- Instituted EIAO visits to small and very small plants to explain the purpose and process for conducting Food Safety Assessments, and to offer resources to plant owners and operators to help them be prepared for the assessments.
- Initiated educational web seminars to highlight steps that small and very small plants can take to improve their food safety and food defense plans.
- Shared information with small and very small plant owners and operators on how to contact USDA's Rural Development Agency regarding low interest loans for small businesses, and established a link to the Rural Development Agency on the FSIS web site.

- Identified a proposal through collaboration with the Cooperative State Research Extension and Education Service (CSREES) to conduct a study on the training needs of small and very small meat, poultry, and egg processors.
- Collected feedback from users through a Federal Register Notice on the Technical Service Center, and responded with an action plan to improve services to small and very small plants.
- Collaborated with the International HACCP Alliance to begin the process of compiling and coordinating available technical resources, and to get input on small/very small plant needs.
- Modified food defense plan guidance based on feedback from small and very small plant owners and operators.
- Developed and expanded a small/very small plant section for the FSIS web site including a section for directly ordering materials and Frequently Asked Questions.
- Developed a small/very small plant start up package to help owners and operators apply for a grant of federal inspection and posted the materials on the FSIS web site for easy access.
- Submitted articles to trade publications to deliver outreach messages and solicit feedback from user groups.

An updated version of the FSIS Strategic Implementation Plan to Enhance Outreach to Small and Very Small Plants has been developed showing all action items completed in FY 06, and adding more action items to be completed in FY 07. It is posted on the FSIS web page at: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/SVSP_Strategic_Plan_FY06FY07.pdf.

FSIS will continue to solicit input and feedback from NACMPI as we make progress on enhancing our outreach to small and very small plants.

Contact Person

Dr. Karlease Kelly
Phone: 202-205-0194
E-mail: karlease.kelly@fsis.usda.gov