

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection

November 5, 2003

Sub-Committee Number 1

Issue: What is the Best Use of Data to Support Risk-Based Inspection?

Sub-Committee Chair: Dr. David Carpenter

Members:

Ms. Sandra Eskin	American Associations Retired Persons, MD
Ms. Deanna Baldwin	Maryland Department of Agriculture, MD (Absent)
Dr. Joseph J. Harris	Southwest Meat Association, TX

Public in attendance:

Dr. Jay Wenthert	American Association of Meat Processors
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1. *What reliable sources of data should the Agency ensure that it is utilizing to help achieve Dr. Murano's vision?*

The sub-committee identified a range of sources of data - both quantitative and qualitative - that the agency utilizes, or could utilize, in its work. We focused on two sources: (1) industry data and (2) data collected by state agencies and derived from state-sponsored research. Regarding industry data, the sub-committee believes that industry has the potential to provide a greater amount of useful data but that the potential is not being fully realized. The sub-committee acknowledges that obstacles to greater data sharing exist and recommends that the agency work with industry associations to address these obstacles and facilitate increased data sharing. This data-sharing should occur on a regular basis, at periodic public meetings or other fora. Regarding state data, this is one important source of data that FSIS is not currently utilizing. The sub-committee recommends that FSIS work with state agencies to develop a process for regular data-sharing. Efforts should also be made to explore the possibility of obtaining data from other countries such as Canada.

2. *Is there data that the Agency is collecting, or that it could be collecting, of which FSIS is not taking full advantage?*

The sub-committee recommends that FSIS outline and evaluate data that it is currently collecting. The Agency needs to establish databases of currently available data. The sub-committee recommends that the data actually collected by the agency or that ought to be collected by the agency to give greater advantages and usefulness to its database analysis should include:

- More detailed correlations of farm to table data that will augment food safety policies development and public health outcomes. The data accrued should be from the databases of other USDA agencies and non - USDA agencies such as FDA, CDC, the states and others.
 - Previously conducted “Correlation meetings” sponsored by the agency resulted in the effective use of data on the range of inspection practices in each of the districts. Although these events may be determined to be resource intensive, such meetings where feedback are discussed were beneficial and need to be conducted on a more frequent and more regular basis
3. *Are there methods of analysis that the Agency may not be using, or that the Agency should be using, that would enhance its ability to anticipate hazards?*

The sub-committee is unaware of specific data analysis methods the agency should be using to enhance its ability to anticipate hazards. It is expected that there likely are such methodologies currently in use by private and or public entities. The sub-committee supports the concept of FSIS hosting a technical conference related to this subject. Such a conference would create an open forum for interested parties to more fully explore this issue.