

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection

November 5, 2003

Sub-Committee Number 3

Issue: How Can FSIS Better Associate Food Safety Activities with Public Health Surveillance Data?

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1. *How might data linking food products to foodborne illness cases be used to suggest changes in regulatory policy?*

We considered this question based on both current policy and the need for future policy.

Utilization of outside experts is imperative to achieve unbiased sampling designs and data analysis.

FSIS should:

- Review available data trends and determine statistical significance (confidence intervals around point estimates) related to specific policies.

Design

- Design and development of statistically-sound sampling methodology
- Gain consensus among FSIS experts on sample design and methodology.

Analysis

- Extrapolate data using scientifically-sound methodology.
- Base future policies on statistically significant results and the use of risk assessment
- Support the agency in continuing baseline studies using scientifically-sound sampling methodologies.

2. *How do/can we get data that is linked to food?*

FSIS should:

- Continuously review case-control studies (outbreak and sporadic cases) as they become available to identify risk factors. This should also include foods other than meat and poultry.
- Continue to move forward with the attribution project to include concepts such as Bayesian modeling, risk ranking, case-control studies and a review of all other pertinent work by other federal agencies, think tanks, academia, state and local agencies, and industry and consumer groups.
- Review *Salmonella* serotypes most frequently associated with human foodborne illnesses and relate these to those obtained through FSIS HACCP regulatory sampling. Further sub-typing (such as PFGE, ribotype, etc.) of selected isolates should be considered.
- Work with health insurance companies and HMO's and the Department of Homeland Security to identify spikes in human health cases that might be associated with meat and poultry products.
- Review early detection and Public Health Laboratories Information System
- FSIS should review Department of Homeland Security initiatives to determine relationships to foodborne illness and public health protections

While beyond the scope of FSIS, efforts to enhance public health infrastructure, increase disease reporting, decrease time-span of interviewing of patients (cases) and provide further education.

3. *What other types of data should be considered in development of regulatory policies (e.g., data FSIS currently collects in plants)?*

FSIS should:

- Review regulations, policies and procedures to ensure consistency and relevance to the FSIS public health mission. This process should both eliminate unnecessary activities and free-up FSIS resources for public health focus. This would include the inspection of data from PBIS, microbiological and chemical testing.
- Re-examine existing data and determine usefulness for public health purposes.
- Investigate different uses and approaches to data analysis. This would apply to both current and future data gathering.