

Issue Paper: Inspection at Talmadge-Aiken Plants
National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection
Presented by Cheryl Hicks
November 5, 2003

Inspection at Talmadge-Aiken Plants

- Undersecretary's Goal: model of management effectiveness and efficiency
- Administrator's Vision: premier public health regulatory agency
- FSIS is retooling its workforce and infrastructure
- Office of Field Operations – moving towards team inspection approach

Inspection at Talmadge-Aiken Plants

- Federal-State Cooperative Inspection Program (FSCIP) – state employees provide inspection at Federal plants
- 9 States – 350 plants
- Role of FSCIP may need to be re-examined in light of OFO retooling of its workforce and approach to inspection and enforcement

Inspection at Talmadge-Aiken Plants

- Authority – Talmadge-Aiken Act of 1962
- Plant-by-plant decisions by FSIS, in consultation with the State program
- FSIS makes decision based on best use of its Federal resources
- Economics of assigning a Federal inspector to remote location – State willing and able to provide coverage

Inspection at Talmadge-Aiken Plants

- Funding of FSCIP has been at 50% consistent with State program funding
- State budget difficulties have led some to consider dropping T/A arrangements
- FSIS move to integrated team approach to inspection and enforcement calls into question value of T/A arrangements, at least in some cases

Inspection at Talmadge-Aiken Plants

- Two separate management structures involved
- Dealing with compliance and employee issues becomes complex and burdensome
- Undue time delays and inefficiencies
- These costs may offset benefits in some situations
- T/A and team approach may be incompatible

Inspection at Talmadge-Aiken Plants

- How would you define a role for Talmadge-Aiken in today's public health regulatory environment?

- Under what conditions would Talmadge-Aiken be appropriate in this environment?
- What measures of effectiveness should FSIS use to determine the value of a given Talmadge-Aiken arrangement?