

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection

Update on Food Security

FSIS has taken a significant number of aggressive actions to address the security of FSIS-regulated food products. These include establishing a new office dedicated to the issue, developing vulnerability assessments, and issuing guidance documents. We are also working to develop countermeasures for preventing intentional adulteration of food at specific points along the supply chain.

FSIS has consulted the National Advisory Committee for Meat and Poultry Inspection on food security issues twice since 2003. At the June 2003 NACMPI meeting, FSIS put forth several questions to the committee concerning increasing industry food security awareness and whether the Agency should mandate that plants have a food security plan. The Committee responded that FSIS should continue to stress the importance of prevention and response preparedness to industry and coordinate food security activities with other government and industry organizations. The Committee also said it did not believe that food security plans should be mandated.

FSIS has undertaken many initiatives to strengthen coordination and communication with industry and other Federal/State agencies on food security issues. For example, in late 2003, FSIS published the *FSIS Safety and Security Guidelines for the Transportation and Distribution of Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products*. Designed to assist small facilities and shippers, the voluntary guidelines provide a list of safety and security measures that should be taken to prevent these products from intentional and unintentional contamination. More recently, the Agency signed a cooperative agreement with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration and the Department of Homeland Security to develop best practices and guidelines for Federal-State cooperation in the event of a food safety or food security emergency. Additionally, FSIS is one of the lead agencies participating in the Food and Agriculture Information Sharing Council—a public/private partnership to facilitate information sharing and coordination of food security activities.

At the June 2, 2004, NACMPI meeting, FSIS again asked the advisory committee to address the issue of whether FSIS should require food security plans. The Committee responded that rather than mandate food security plans a “partnership” be developed with industry to share information and assist industry with conducting self-assessments and developing mitigation strategies.

FSIS sees merit in the NACMPI recommendations, and agrees with the need to share information materials with industry. In light of the advice of NACMPI, FSIS will also continue to work cooperatively with industry to increase awareness. FSIS will develop model food security plans, and distribute these plans to industry for voluntary use. FSIS has also developed a food security self-assessment checklist that it will make available to

industry through the constituent update. Finally, the Agency is also developing a training program for industry trade associations on the CARVER + Shock vulnerability assessment methodology that was used by both FSIS and FDA in conducting their vulnerability assessments.

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