

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON

MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION

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PLENARY SESSION

+ + + + +

June 22, 2023

10:00 a.m.

Via Webex

CHAIR: DR. EMILIO J. ESTEBAN
Under Secretary
Office of Food Safety

FACILITATOR: MS. KATRINA GREEN
Designated Federal Officer
Office of Policy & Program Development

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DR. SELENA KREMER
DR. TERESA TAYLOR
MS. ANGELICA MARRERO SANCHEZ
MS. MERYL SILVERMAN
MR. CONNOR KIPPE
DR. GLENDA LEWIS
MS. YOLANDA MITCHELL

I-N-D-E-X

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 (10:00 a.m.)

3 MS. GREEN: Great morning, everyone. I am
4 Katrina Green, the NACMPI Designated Federal Officer
5 and I want to welcome you to Day 2 of the NACMPI
6 Public Meeting.

7 Before we begin, I want to provide a few
8 housekeeping items. For those that joined the plenary
9 on yesterday, most of these housekeeping reminders
10 will be familiar to you.

11 First, I want to remind everyone that the
12 meeting is being recorded, and FSIS will post the
13 recording and transcripts when they become available,
14 on the FSIS website at www.fsis.usda.gov.

15 With the exception of our committee members
16 and the designated speakers, all other attendee
17 microphones were automatically muted when you logged
18 on today. You will not have the ability to use your
19 camera except if you making a public comment.

20 I do want to also point out that on
21 yesterday, there were a few people that experienced
22 some technical difficulties, particularly after
23 entering the breakout session. Although we hope that
24 this does not occur today, if by chance it does, you
25 may request assistance by clicking the Help button in

1 the upper right-hand corner of your screen.

2 I also want to mention that if you are a
3 panelist or a speaker, and you log out of the webinar,
4 you will come back in as an attendee and no longer as
5 a speaker, therefore you will need to log back in, but
6 you have to be repromoted to panelist in order to be
7 given the ability to unmute yourself and be fully
8 engaged in the breakout session.

9 That should resolve a lot of the issues we
10 had that were technical problems on yesterday. So, if
11 needed, also if closed captions are needed, you can
12 enable that by clicking the Close Caption or CC bubble
13 in the bottom left of your screen.

14 Today, there will be one brief public
15 comment period, that will occur after my opening
16 remarks. If you wish to provide comment, please use
17 the Raise Hand, or chat feature and the event producer
18 will unmute you when it is your turn to speak.

19 For our phone line, audio-only attendees,
20 you will need to press pound 2 to enter the queue
21 during the public comment period. We request that all
22 attendees please introduce yourself by providing your
23 name and affiliation before providing comment. Each
24 person will be provided two minutes to make their
25 comment today.

1 Lastly, the chat feature is also available
2 for attendees. Comments made in the chat will be
3 shared with the Committee. In addition, attendees may
4 submit written comments according to the options and
5 directions outlined in the *Federal Register* notice
6 announcing the meeting. These comments will also be
7 shared with the Committee when they become available.

8 The remainder of today's agenda will include
9 continued subcommittee discussions from Day 1,
10 followed by a lunch period, additional subcommittee
11 discussions, a brief break. Then the full committee
12 will reconvene for the subcommittee chairs to present
13 their reports.

14 If the subcommittee has determined that
15 there is not enough time to complete their
16 recommendations, the subcommittee DFO or moderator
17 will notify me, and we will schedule another public
18 meeting to complete the work. After the subcommittee
19 reports are completed, then the full committee will
20 discuss and vote on the recommendations. This will be
21 followed by closing remarks from Dr. Esteban, and the
22 meeting will adjourn.

23 I will now turn it over to the event
24 producer for public comment.

25 EVENT PRODUCER: At this time, if you would

1 like to make a public comment, please use the raise
2 hand icon in Webex to enter the queue. You'll hear a
3 beep when your line is unmuted, at which point please
4 then state your name, affiliation and question, or
5 comment. If you are audio-only, on the phone, you may
6 dial pound 2 on your telephone keypad to enter the
7 queue.

8 Again, if you'd like to make a comment at
9 this time, please use the raise hand feature or dial
10 pound 2 if you are audio-only.

11 (Pause.)

12 EVENT PRODUCER: I am not showing any raised
13 hands at this time.

14 MS. GREEN: Okay. If we do not have anyone
15 who is interested in making public comment at this
16 time, we will proceed to our subcommittee groups.

17 EVENT PRODUCER: All right. At this time,
18 I'm going to be starting the breakout sessions for the
19 subcommittees. If you are main committee member, I
20 have assigned you to your group. Please be sure to
21 click on the pop-up to join your group. If you are
22 meant to be -- if you are not assigned a group at this
23 time and you're meant to be in a particular group and
24 you need assistance moving to that group, please let
25 me know.

1 Otherwise, I will give you the option to
2 look at all breakout sessions the participants have on
3 the right-hand side of your screen, and you'll be able
4 to join the subcommittee of your choosing.

5 COURT REPORTER: Hi, Teagan (ph.). This is
6 Tim Atkinson. I'm not seeing any pop-up for me.

7 EVENT PRODUCER: All right. Which group are
8 you meant to be in?

9 COURT REPORTER: I'm the court reporter for,
10 I believe I was in A yesterday.

11 EVENT PRODUCER: All right.

12 COURT REPORTER: Oh, there it is. Thank
13 you.

14 (Off the record.)

15 (On the record.)

16 MS. GREEN: Okay, everyone. Okay, I'm going
17 to wait a few seconds to make sure everyone is back.
18 Okay. From what I've been hearing, sounds like
19 everybody's been having some good discussions during
20 the breakout.

21 FEMALE SPEAKER: You're on mute, Katrina.

22 DR. DILLON: I can hear you.

23 MS. MARRERO SANCHEZ: You can hear me?
24 Okay, great. What I was saying was that it sounds
25 like everybody's been having great discussions during

1 the breakout sessions, but it is now time for us to
2 take a one-hour break -- well a little bit less than
3 one-hour break, for lunch. So we will resume with our
4 concurrent subcommittee meetings at 1 p.m. Enjoy your
5 lunch break.

6 FEMALE SPEAKER: Katrina, you're still on
7 mute.

8 FEMALE SPEAKER: Katrina's not muted. I can
9 hear her.

10 DR. CHAVES: I can hear her. This is Byron.

11 MS. GREEN: Okay, who is not able to hear
12 me? Maybe I will suggest that you press the ask for
13 help button.

14 (Simultaneous speaking.)

15 FEMALE SPEAKER: -- when you're in the
16 breakout session, if you're having any --

17 MS. GREEN: Okay.

18 FEMALE SPEAKER: -- also if you can send the
19 event producer a chat while you're in the main
20 session.

21 MS. GREEN: Okay. Thank you for clarifying
22 that. Okay. We will break for lunch, and we will
23 rejoin at 1 p.m. Thank you.

24 (Off the record.)

25 (On the record.)

1 MS. GREEN: Okay, I think I may have been
2 still muted when I was talking. So, event producer,
3 if you could provide the instructions for everyone to
4 rejoin the subcommittee groups.

5 EVENT PRODUCER: Absolutely. I'm going to
6 go ahead and start the subcommittee groups. You
7 should all be assigned, if you are a person who has an
8 assignment. Otherwise if you do need a hand getting
9 to your subcommittee group, let me know. Otherwise,
10 I'm going to go ahead and start the breakout sessions.
11 And you should be able to join the breakout sessions
12 from the participants box, if you are not already
13 assigned.

14 (Off the record.)

15 (On the record.)

16 MS. GREEN: Okay. It is now 2:30, and we're
17 in the process now of getting the subcommittee reports
18 sent over to the committee members. But while that is
19 taking place, I do want to thank everybody for your
20 work during the subcommittee breakout sessions.

21 A special thank you to Angelica Marrero
22 Sanchez for serving as subcommittee DFO, and also to
23 Dr. James Dillon, who not only took on the role of
24 note-taker for Group A, but also served as the
25 chairperson.

1 Also, for Group B, special thanks to Meryl
2 Silverman, who was the subcommittee DFO, and Anastasia
3 Larkin, who served as note-taker, and Dr. Byron
4 Chaves, who served as the subcommittee chair.

5 So we will now begin the subcommittee report
6 for outreach to prospective applicants for FSIS
7 inspection. I will turn it over to our chairperson
8 for that subcommittee, Dr. James Dillon, who will
9 provide the report.

10 DR. DILLON: Good afternoon, everybody.
11 Thank you for tuning in here to see the subcommittee
12 report. Before I get started here, I'd really like to
13 thank my colleagues from the outreach subcommittee.
14 We had a really great discussion --

15 MS. GREEN: Dr. Dillon, we're having some
16 audio issues from you. It sounds very digitized. Is
17 there a way, a chance you could possibly change over
18 to phone audio?

19 DR. DILLON: I could. Let me try something
20 real quick here. Did that help? I shut my video off?

21 MS. GREEN: Oh yes, yes it did.

22 DR. DILLON: Okay. Well maybe we had a
23 bandwidth issue problem. I'll just leave the video
24 off.

25 So, to restart here, I just want to take a

1 moment to thank everybody that was one of my
2 colleagues on the outreach subcommittee. We had great
3 discussion over the past couple of days, and I think
4 we came up with a really good product. And without
5 further ado, I will share my screen here, and read
6 through that product. Okay.

7 So the first question we were asked to
8 address is, what obstacles impede individuals in
9 underserved communities from accessing FSIS'
10 information resources? One type of obstacle that
11 exists in more rural areas throughout the country is
12 in actual access to information. This is partially
13 due to a lack of availability of broadband internet
14 access in some areas.

15 There is also a lack of available local, in-
16 person consultative services to connect underserved
17 communities to FSIS information resources.
18 Additionally, some underserved communities may have
19 difficulty accessing information resources due to
20 language barriers.

21 A second type of obstacle that exists is a
22 lack of knowledge about where to start looking for
23 resources or even knowledge about who needs
24 inspection. There is a tremendous amount of
25 information available online, but that can be

1 overwhelming to someone who is not familiar with the
2 industry.

3 Progressing to question 2, we were asked,
4 what barriers do individuals face when applying for
5 FSIS inspection? The first fundamental barrier
6 numerous individuals face when considering an
7 application for inspection is a lack of access to
8 capital. USDA attempted to address this barrier
9 through grant programs. However, these grant programs
10 all too often failed to reach underserved populations.

11 The grant process was too complicated for
12 many producers to successfully navigate, in some
13 cases, even being complicated enough to require
14 businesses to obtain the services of a grant writer.
15 This put many prospective businesses from underserved
16 populations at a significant disadvantage in obtaining
17 a grant.

18 In addition, by targeting businesses
19 classified as small or very small, according to
20 existing size classifications based on employee
21 numbers, these grants all too often ended up being
22 seized by larger establishments. This may have
23 included businesses that are individually classified
24 as small, but are actually owned by larger umbrella
25 corporations, possessing greater resources and

1 expertise to guide them through the grant application
2 process.

3 A second fundamental barrier individuals
4 face when applying for inspection is a lack of
5 technical knowledge regarding what it takes to build
6 and run a successful establishment. Many prospective
7 businesses may not even know that they need
8 inspection, let alone how to begin the process of
9 obtaining inspection.

10 Currently, no clear, concise guidance
11 document is published by FSIS that points prospective
12 applicants to resources for determining whether or not
13 they need inspection, how to apply for inspection, how
14 inspection works, or how to begin the process of
15 designing a production facility that complies with
16 regulatory requirements.

17 Such a document should also include how to
18 access outreach services to assist them in the process
19 of meeting regulatory requirements and obtaining a
20 grant of inspection. This document should also be
21 available in multiple languages sufficient to reach
22 underserved populations.

23 A third barrier inhibiting many
24 establishments in underserved communities from
25 applying for FSIS inspection is their own desire to

1 maintain state inspection as opposed to FSIS
2 inspection. Many establishments make the choice to
3 obtain or maintain state inspection despite the
4 business limitations imposed by the FSIS prohibition
5 on at least equal-to state-inspected products entering
6 interstate commerce.

7 Participation in interstate commerce would
8 have an undeniably positive impact on these businesses
9 and their communities, with no negative impact on food
10 safety as evidenced by annual audits of at least
11 equal-to state meat and poultry inspection programs by
12 FSIS.

13 Given the limitations faced by state-
14 inspected establishments, coupled with the persistent
15 choices made by many establishments to obtain and
16 maintain state inspection, it stands to reason that at
17 least equal-to state meat and poultry inspection
18 programs are in some manner preferable to many
19 establishments in underserved communities. This
20 preference is therefore a barrier to those
21 establishments applying for FSIS inspection.

22 An additional barrier to both new and
23 existing establishments that appears to be emerging
24 involves the regulatory burden environmental control
25 agencies may place on meat and poultry production

1 establishments regarding wastewater handling
2 requirements.

3 Though these regulatory efforts are
4 currently in an exploratory phase, the proposed
5 changes would involve large expenses for small
6 businesses to hold, test and remove wastewater from
7 their facilities far in excess of the current
8 regulatory burden. This could have a disproportionate
9 and potentially disastrous impact on small and very
10 small meat and poultry processors.

11 Some establishments may also face
12 difficulties in disposal of inedible materials.
13 Establishments in underserved rural communities may
14 incur a significant expense to dispose of these
15 materials if they are located a significant distance
16 from rendering establishments.

17 The third question the subcommittee was
18 asked to address is, what steps, outreach methods,
19 partnerships or strategies should FSIS consider to
20 raise awareness of its available resources in
21 underserved communities?

22 The first method FSIS should utilize to
23 raise awareness of available resources in underserved
24 communities is to publish a clear, concise guidance
25 document that points prospective applications to

1 resources for determining whether or not they need
2 inspection, how to apply for inspection, how
3 inspection works, and how to begin the process of
4 designing a production facility that complies with
5 regulatory requirements.

6 In particular, the document should provide
7 guidance on facility construction, product flow,
8 written food safety systems, such as SSOP, HACCP,
9 recall plans, laboratory testing and prerequisite
10 programs, and potentially guidance for engaging with
11 other regulatory entities that may have jurisdiction
12 impacting meat and poultry businesses.

13 Such a document should also include how to
14 assess outreach services to assist prospective
15 applicants in the process of meeting regulatory
16 requirements and obtaining a grant of inspection.

17 These outreach services may include but are
18 not necessarily limited to trade organizations, state
19 departments of agriculture, extension offices,
20 academic institutions, local health departments, state
21 meat and poultry inspection programs, local community
22 development offices, and FSIS websites, district
23 office points of contact, state and federal compliance
24 personnel and EIAO personnel. This document should
25 also be available in multiple languages sufficient to

1 reach underserved populations.

2 A second method FSIS should utilize to raise
3 awareness of available resource in underserved
4 communities is to expand engagement and accessibility
5 to increase participation in small plant round table
6 and town hall virtual meetings.

7 This may be accomplished by increasing
8 proactive engagement with state meat and poultry
9 inspection programs, local health departments, local
10 and regional meat processing academies and other
11 educational centers, meat, poultry and other food
12 trade organizations, small business associations and
13 livestock associations. FSIS should also publicize
14 the sign-up mechanism for meeting announcements.

15 A third method FSIS should utilize to raise
16 awareness of available resource in underserved
17 communities is to reemphasize to FSIS personnel,
18 particularly compliance and EIAO personnel, that a key
19 part of their job duties is to proactively connect
20 establishments and prospective establishments with
21 targeted resources and assistance that may benefit
22 that specific business.

23 FSIS should also consider forming a
24 partnership with the Small Business Administration to
25 help connect underserved communities with available

1 resources.

2 The subcommittee was asked question 4, which
3 states, what datasets or other resources are available
4 to assist FSIS in identifying underserved communities
5 that would benefit from increased slaughter or
6 processing capacity? FSIS should consider analyzing
7 data from FSIS sources asking the following questions.

8 How many individuals are contacting FSIS and
9 expressing interest in starting meat and poultry
10 businesses in a 12-month period? How many businesses
11 actually apply for inspection in a 12-month period?
12 How many businesses that apply for inspection actually
13 obtain a grant of inspection in a 12-month period?
14 And how many businesses that obtain a grant of
15 inspection in a 12-month period are still open one
16 year after receiving a grant of inspection and
17 beginning operations?

18 FSIS should conduct follow-up surveys to
19 determine common reasons why interested parties
20 decided not to pursue FSIS inspection, or common
21 reasons why businesses which obtained a grant of
22 inspection either failed to begin operations or ceased
23 operations. Further analysis of this data should be
24 analyzed for impact on underserved communities.

25 FSIS should consider reaching out to state

1 departments of agriculture, extension offices, local
2 USDA offices, Farm Bureau and community development
3 organizations regarding the number of inquiries they
4 receive about how to obtain a grant of inspection, or
5 how to start a meat and/or poultry business.

6 FSIS should consider obtaining population
7 and livestock/producer density data to target outreach
8 activities to underserved areas. This may include an
9 analysis of numbers and locations of large and small
10 livestock operators in relation to large and small
11 slaughter and processing establishments, including
12 establishments under both state and federal
13 inspection.

14 Particular attention should be paid to the
15 locations of small livestock producers with respect to
16 locations of smaller slaughter facilities. FSIS
17 should also consider reporting this data after a
18 reevaluation of size classification definitions. This
19 suggestion will be explored further under question 6.

20 FSIS may wish to partner with the Centers
21 for Disease Control, utilizing FoodNet, to explore a
22 comparison of foodborne illness location data and
23 source by population demographics.

24 The subcommittee then addressed question 5,
25 what concrete actions can FSIS take, alone or in

1 partnership with other stakeholder organizations, to
2 most effectively stimulate increased slaughter or
3 processing capacity in underserved communities?

4 The single most impactful action FSIS could
5 take is to publish a clear, concise guidance document
6 that points prospective applicants to resources for
7 determining whether or not they need inspection, how
8 to apply for inspection, how inspection works, and how
9 to begin the process of designing a production
10 facility that complies with regulatory requirements.

11 In particular, the document should provide
12 guidance on facility construction, product flow,
13 written food safety systems, such as SSOP, HACCP,
14 recall plans, laboratory testing and prerequisite
15 programs, and potentially guidance for engaging with
16 other regulatory entities that may have jurisdiction
17 impacting meat and poultry businesses.

18 Such a document should also include how to
19 access outreach services to assist them in the process
20 of meeting regulatory requirements in obtaining a
21 grant of inspection. These outreach services may
22 include but are not necessarily limited to trade
23 organizations, state departments of agriculture,
24 extension offices, academic institutions, local health
25 departments, state meat and poultry inspection

1 programs, local community development offices, and
2 FSIS websites, district office points of contact,
3 state and federal compliance personnel and EIAO
4 personnel.

5 This document should also be available in
6 multiple languages sufficient to reach underserved
7 populations. Stakeholder input should be utilized
8 throughout the development process, and social media
9 should be utilized to advertise the availability of
10 the guide.

11 FSIS should utilize EIAO personnel to
12 conduct onsite outreach visits for prospective
13 establishments from less of a quote/unquote,
14 "regulatory perspective," and more of a,
15 quote/unquote, "consultative perspective." FSIS
16 should consider allocating individuals entirely to
17 this task, instead of making it a portion of existing
18 employee responsibilities.

19 State meat and poultry inspection programs
20 have historically been a key provider of inspection
21 services to underserved communities. However, the
22 current prohibition on entry of at least equal-to
23 state-inspected products into interstate commerce
24 forces these establishments to choose between state
25 inspection and a potential expansion of their

1 business.

2 Many of these establishments make the choice
3 to accept this FSIS-imposed limitation on their growth
4 in order to maintain state inspection, which limits
5 the benefits those establishments provide to their
6 underserved community, including employment
7 opportunities and food security.

8 Current options presented to states and
9 establishments under the Cooperative Interstate
10 Shippers Program and the Talmadge-Aiken program are
11 insufficient, since they require state meat and
12 poultry inspection programs to perform same-as
13 inspection, thereby negating the potential benefits of
14 an inspection program tailored to small and very small
15 establishments that can be obtained under an at least
16 equal-to state meat and poultry inspection program.

17 FSIS should lift the prohibition on entry
18 into interstate commerce for products from state-
19 inspected establishments under the inspection of at
20 least equal-to state meat and poultry inspection
21 programs. Prohibition on these products entering
22 international commerce should remain.

23 Question 6, are there any additional
24 thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share?
25 Current size classifications categorize meat and

1 poultry businesses by their number of employees.
2 There is a tremendous difference between an
3 establishment with up to 499 employees and an
4 establishment with 11 employees. The current
5 classification definitions would classify both of
6 these types of establishments as, quote/unquote,
7 "small."

8 FSIS should reevaluate the entirety of their
9 size classification system to better group similar
10 establishments in size classification categories.
11 Stakeholder input should be obtained throughout this
12 process with an emphasis on small and very small
13 establishments.

14 FSIS should evaluate the vast amount of
15 information accessible through FSIS website to improve
16 ease of navigation and assist producers and
17 prospective applicants with obtaining applicable
18 information for a given topic in a clear, concise
19 fashion. The current presentation of a tremendous
20 amount of information is cumbersome and confusing.

21 FSIS should proactively engage with
22 environmental regulatory agencies to ensure the
23 proposed revisions to standards governing the
24 discharge of wastewater from meat and poultry
25 slaughter and processing establishments are not

1 significantly detrimental to small and very small meat
2 and poultry businesses.

3 And finally, FSIS should explore options to
4 assist small and very small meat and poultry
5 establishments in areas underserved by rendering
6 resources. This may include options such as incentive
7 programs or central collection points, but should seek
8 to give underserved communities options on how to meet
9 regulatory requirements for inedible disposal in a
10 practical manner.

11 That concludes the recommendations of
12 Subcommittee A. The entirety of this document was
13 voted on and accepted unanimously by the subcommittee.
14 That concludes my presentation.

15 MS. GREEN: Okay, we will now move to the
16 subcommittee discussions by the full committee, the
17 subcommittee report discussions, I'm sorry, by the
18 full committee. So, I will turn it back over to Dr.
19 Dillon to lead that segment.

20 DR. DILLON: Okay. Are there any questions
21 regarding the document?

22 DR. CHAVES: I have a question. This is
23 Byron Chaves.

24 DR. DILLON: Sure, go ahead.

25 DR. CHAVES: Of all the recommendations that

1 you guys have, we also maybe have many of them, but
2 which ones would you prioritize? What would be your
3 top two, maybe, of things that are more pressing?

4 DR. DILLON: I think that the topic that
5 again and again came up is the one on the screening,
6 where there really is not a clear, concise guidance
7 document that is not hundreds of pages long, and easy
8 to navigate, for prospective applicants. I think that
9 some state programs have guidance like that.

10 In Texas, we have a guidance document like
11 that. It needs a little updating, but we have one,
12 and it's real useful. And I think that for FSIS to
13 take that recommendation and publish a clear, concise
14 guidance document for prospective applicants, that
15 would be exceptionally useful.

16 As far as -- you know, there were several
17 other recommendations on this. I think one of the big
18 ones is the size of establishments classifications.
19 You know, that came up both during the grant process
20 discussion as well as just the general discussion
21 about size classifications, because there's a lot of
22 regulatory requirements that are determined by size
23 classification.

24 And one of the subcommittee members is a
25 owner of a small business under FSIS inspection, and

1 that -- one of our colleagues voiced that if he hires
2 three more people, he changes classification size, to
3 small. And there's a lot of, you know, detriment to
4 that happening, from a regulatory perspective. And
5 really, there is very little that a business with 11
6 employees has in common with a business with 499
7 employees, whereas there's a lot that a business with
8 11 employees has in common with a business with 5 to
9 10 employees.

10 And certainly when you're talking about
11 underserved communities, we're talking about very
12 small businesses and, you know, that size
13 classification, I think is certainly having a negative
14 effect on hiring in those communities, and expansion
15 of those businesses.

16 You know, we weren't -- we didn't discuss
17 this in the, you know, the distilling of these in the
18 subcommittee into ranking of the most important, so
19 I'm probably just speaking for myself here. I also
20 think that allowing state-inspected products into
21 interstate commerce would potentially have a massive
22 impact on some small businesses and their ability to
23 grow.

24 There are more very small establishments
25 under state inspection in the state of Texas than

1 there are under federal inspection. And those
2 businesses have made that choice. Allowing those
3 businesses to grow by participating in interstate
4 commerce would undoubtedly make a difference, and be a
5 positive both for those businesses and their
6 communities.

7 But if I had to pick two, the ones that we
8 discussed maybe the most would be the guidance
9 document, certainly, and potentially the size
10 classification.

11 DR. CHAVES: Awesome, thank you.

12 MS. GALLIMORE: As a member of that
13 subcommittee, I think the two that you highlight are
14 accurate, just based on the discussions that we had.
15 I think those two were definitely the ones that were
16 the most talked about and repetitive throughout. I do
17 disagree on the allowance for state-inspected products
18 to cross state lines, as I would also require
19 statutory change, but the other two, a hundred percent
20 onboard.

21 DR. ESTEBAN: Good afternoon. I don't know
22 if you can hear me. This is Under Secretary Esteban.
23 And I don't know if I can ask a question, but I'm
24 going to ask it anyway.

25 FEMALE SPEAKER: Emilio, I think you get to

1 do whatever you want.

2 DR. ESTEBAN: Oh excellent, I love it. So
3 let me ask you this, to the committee, please. First
4 of all, thank you very much for doing this work. It's
5 very important to us.

6 So the specific question I have is, in your
7 discussions, specifically on the distinction on
8 establishing by employee numbers, did the committee
9 have any thoughts or recommendations they would
10 provide FSIS regarding some alternative way to
11 classify the establishments, say for example, by
12 production volume, or some other characteristic that
13 would be more fair to all players?

14 DR. DILLON: There was some discussions
15 about that. But one thing that really came up, as far
16 as a point of consensus for the committee, is that
17 FSIS should solicit stakeholder input on that
18 question. I think there's a lot of ways to approach
19 that topic, maybe creating additional classifications,
20 that are a little smaller, potentially looking at
21 production volumes.

22 And the thing that's a complicating factor
23 in there, that we did discuss, is when you're talking
24 about, you know, production volumes, you know, with
25 regards to poundage or with regards to annual revenue

1 or things like that, that may look very different, you
2 know, when you're talking about different types of
3 products, such as, you know, if you're talking about a
4 jerky product, we're looking at, you know, a high
5 value product for the amount of poundage produced.

6 You're looking probably at a lot of, you
7 know, customers reached, per pound, so things like
8 that. I think that there's different ways that it
9 could be approached. But the most important thing
10 would be to solicit stakeholder impact, and to try to
11 group those classifications in a more appropriate way,
12 so that similar businesses are grouped together, and
13 that you avoid, you know, essentially putting a cap on
14 a business' growth, because then they're going to be
15 lumped in with regulatory requirements on a much
16 larger business.

17 MS. GALLIMORE: Yeah, completely agree. I
18 think too, we did talk about that employee number is
19 not necessarily a bad thing to use, but the current
20 designation of small and very small based on employee
21 number may not be applicable in this context. So the
22 original context for that was the HACCP and pathogen
23 reduction rule, which was a very different context
24 than it's being used here.

25 DR. ESTEBAN: Thank you very much for that

1 input.

2 DR. DILLON: Any other comments?

3 (No response.)

4 DR. DILLON: All right. I think that
5 concludes my presentation, and I will turn it back
6 over to the moderator.

7 MS. GREEN: My apologies, I am talking on
8 mute.

9 Thank you again, Dr. Dillon.

10 Now that there are no further deliberations
11 for the outreach to prospective applicants for FSIS
12 inspection, I'd like to see if there's anybody that
13 would like to move to nominate the recommendation.

14 DR. DILLON: So moved.

15 DR. WILLIAMS: Second.

16 MS. GREEN: Okay. Can you please, as you
17 move, and you second, can you please provide your
18 name, for the record?

19 DR. DILLON: Motion made by Dr. James
20 Dillon.

21 DR. WILLIAMS: Second made by Dr. Byron
22 Williams.

23 MS. GREEN: Okay. We will attempt, first,
24 since we're in a virtual platform, to adopt the
25 recommendation by acclamation, meaning that if there's

1 anybody who opposes adopting the recommendation, then
2 please indicate that you oppose, versus going name by
3 name for a vote. So, is there anyone who opposes
4 adopting the recommendation?

5 (No response.)

6 MS. GREEN: Okay. Thank you. We will
7 accept this report. Now, we will proceed by beginning
8 with, by Group B, subcommittee report for assistance
9 to businesses currently under FSIS inspection. And
10 the chair for that committee is Dr. Byron Chaves.

11 If you are ready, Dr. Chaves, we can proceed
12 with your report, for your subcommittee.

13 DR. CHAVES: I can't share my screen. Oh,
14 now I can.

15 MS. GREEN: Okay, great.

16 DR. CHAVES: Hold on a second. Can you all
17 see my screen with the report?

18 MS. GREEN: No, I cannot.

19 DR. CHAVES: How about now? Can anybody see
20 it?

21 MS. GREEN: No.

22 DR. CHAVES: No?

23 MALE SPEAKER: Yes.

24 MS. GREEN: I can see it now.

25 FEMALE SPEAKER: There it is.

1 DR. CHAVES: Okay, cool.

2 MS. GREEN: Thank you.

3 DR. CHAVES: Okay. Well, thanks everybody
4 that was in Subcommittee 2, or Subcommittee B. We
5 were working on assistance to current businesses. My
6 name is Byron Chaves, from the University of Nebraska-
7 Lincoln, and I will report on the work that we've been
8 doing for the last couple of days.

9 So, we had six questions, just like group
10 number 1, and there's a lot of things that are maybe a
11 little bit repetition from what was reported from
12 group number 1.

13 But the first question that we had was what
14 barriers significantly inhibit small and very small
15 regulated establishments from operating successfully
16 under FSIS inspection?

17 And so for a little bit of background, we
18 discussed several behavioral, cultural, educational,
19 financial, geographical infrastructural, linguistic,
20 (indiscernible), and other types of barriers that may
21 be faced by small and very small establishments, and
22 the consensus was that these operations do get
23 overwhelmed by the burden of implementation of
24 sanitation performance standards, HACCP regulations
25 and other regulations that are applicable to those

1 facilities.

2 Among the specific barriers that we
3 identified were facilities in states where state
4 inspectors can do inspections on behalf of the federal
5 government, such as the ones that you have on the
6 screen, face additional communication challenges with
7 FSIS, because they have more layers that they have to
8 go through. There's also a high turnover in the food
9 industry as well as a lack of qualified workforce, and
10 of course this poses a challenge for training in
11 sanitation and food safety.

12 Information and guidance documents is not in
13 a format digestible by many small and very small
14 operators, and later on I'll talk about information
15 that is available, but how the format may not be the
16 right format for people.

17 Lack of inspection personnel training on
18 risk-based food safety assessments, and basically just
19 following checklists, lack of training resources and
20 technical assistance in languages other than English,
21 overlooking African, Asian, Eastern European and
22 Hispanic and/or Latino worker training needs, low
23 literacy level of plant owners and workers, hindering
24 training effectiveness.

25 The regulatory burden is disproportionately

1 large on small and very small plants, which was
2 already discussed, and training is time consuming and
3 often away from the plant, making it difficult for
4 establishments to send people off to those sorts of
5 trainings.

6 So that the recommendations that we have,
7 based on question 1, to FSIS are to one, develop
8 guidance for industry on product disposition when
9 potential deviations have occurred. This is in
10 response to the financial burden imposed by having to
11 discard products that may be otherwise used in
12 alternative applications.

13 And so, we talked about being heavily
14 isolated and not having access to rendering facilities
15 and those things, but also the financial burden that
16 is imposed by having to throw away food that could be
17 used in other alternative uses.

18 Number two, expand guidance to industry on
19 how to develop and maintain SSOP and HACCP
20 documentation, due to the lack of food safety
21 management system expertise that these facilities
22 have, as opposed to the lack of resources to hire a
23 consultant or a full-time staff member that is
24 completely dedicated to developing and maintaining the
25 documentation.

1 Identify inspection personnel training needs
2 to communicate more effectively with establishment
3 management and personnel, to increase trust and
4 maintain a positive working relationship, so that
5 would be more on the training of the personnel, of the
6 inspection personnel.

7 Improve the way that FSIS disseminates new
8 versions of guidance, notices and directives, so that
9 processors are aware in a timely fashion. And we do
10 have suggestions for this later on in question number
11 5.

12 Promote practical application of HACCP
13 training. Currently we know that HACCP training can
14 be very passive, and so the content needs to be
15 reconciled with the reality of small and very small
16 establishments, considering ethnic and cultural
17 backgrounds.

18 And lastly, streamline communication,
19 collaboration and partnership between establishments
20 and FSIS regional offices to reduce time and financial
21 costs of appeals and other processes. So again, this
22 is more related to states where the state inspectors
23 can do inspections on behalf of the federal
24 government.

25 Okay. Moving on to question number 2, what

1 are the most critical kinds of information that would
2 help make small and very small establishments in
3 underserved communities more successful? And so when
4 we thought about the answers to this question, we
5 thought more successful in complying with regulations,
6 right, with federal regulations.

7 So the subcommittee discussed several
8 aspects, or different types of information regarding
9 type and access that would help small and very small
10 facilities increase compliance with federal
11 regulations in a more effective way. The subcommittee
12 agreed that creating a positive, mature food safety
13 culture is not a one-size-fits-all kind of approach,
14 but that the FSIS inspectors should a part of the
15 development of that culture, to of course increase
16 compliance with regulations and put a safer product on
17 the market.

18 However, there are some instances of power
19 structure dynamics between many inspectors and their
20 assigned facilities that may hinder effective
21 communication, the development of trust between the
22 facility and FSIS, and the implementation of risk-
23 based food safety and other controls, which
24 ultimately, of course, have an effect on public
25 health.

1 The subcommittee's consensus is that FSIS
2 needs to provide further support with documentation
3 and implementation of food safety regulations. Some
4 of the specific kinds of information that we
5 identified came from different sources, such as
6 cooperative extension, guidance documents, peer-
7 reviewed publications, pathogen predictive modeling,
8 social media and many others.

9 And so the recommendations here were to,
10 number one, design and administer a needs assessment
11 survey for managers and for non-managers in the meat
12 and poultry industry or in regulated facilities, to
13 better identify preferred training content and
14 delivery methods that are adaptable to the work
15 schedules and the time constraints that we know that
16 industry faces, especially small and very small
17 operators.

18 Design practical training materials in the
19 form of case studies, videos, infographics and others
20 that can be combined in a training toolkit for
21 establishments, including training in how to use
22 available resources. So things like the pathogen
23 predictive modeling may have a lot of applications for
24 HACCP validation, but there's really not a lot of
25 guidance on how to use those sorts of tools.

1 Develop specific and culturally sensitive
2 training resources for underserved communities such as
3 Amish and tribal nations. Improve communication and
4 increase collaborative outreach between processors and
5 federal inspectors and their regional district
6 offices.

7 And then again, we had a theme that was
8 basically streamlining communication between
9 inspectors, the regional offices and small and very
10 small facilities, and use them as a resource, not just
11 for enforcement of the regulation but also for
12 resources for how to comply with the regulation.

13 Another recommendation is to increase
14 practical training experience for inspection personnel
15 on food safety, humane handling and other topics.
16 Provide resources to industry in various formats and
17 languages, to consider equitable access to resources
18 in different areas of the country, maybe rural areas,
19 as well as non-native English speakers, and people
20 with various literacy levels.

21 And lastly, for question number 2, provide
22 training for FSIS personnel on diversity, equity and
23 inclusion as well as microaggressions and cultural
24 sensitivity to better work with the ethnic and
25 cultural reality of the meat and poultry workforce.

1 Okay. For question number 3, we tried to
2 answer the question, how can FSIS more effectively
3 promote awareness and the use of current, valid
4 scientific information in support of small and very
5 small establishments' food safety systems?

6 So, for this question, the subcommittee
7 discussed the many resources that already exist, and
8 agreed that there is a significant amount of technical
9 information that processors can use. However, we also
10 have consensus that FSIS has done a really good job at
11 creating guidance documents and materials, but that
12 those documents are typically in English and may not
13 be in a format that small and very small facilities
14 can digest.

15 And of course we know that a lot of the
16 guidance documents are labeled, you know, guidance for
17 small and very small food facilities, but we are not
18 taking into account that some of them may not have the
19 literacy level to read the document in English, and
20 maybe they need it in a different language.

21 Other things that we discussed is that
22 scientific publications and white papers from
23 commodity boards may not be free of charge, and that
24 will, of course, decrease access to those validated
25 technical information pieces.

1 Specific ways to promote awareness and use
2 of information were to expand collaborations with
3 cooperative extension, land grant institutions,
4 community colleges and other technical schools, create
5 a peer-to-peer network, support network for small
6 facilities in a specific region, where they can share
7 information, resources, answers to technical questions
8 and things like that.

9 Increase social media presence in dynamic
10 formats, and conduct webinars on how to use guidance
11 documents, notices, the pathogen predictive modeling,
12 for example, and others.

13 So the recommendation here for FSIS was one
14 of our strongest recommendations, is to establish a
15 central repository of updated HACCP validation
16 resources which can serve as a searchable database for
17 processors to find relevant technical information.

18 We also discussed that we are aware that
19 some universities such as Wisconsin, Texas A&M, Ohio
20 State already have some of these things, but those
21 databases tend to be a little outdated. And so having
22 something that is more centralized database that can
23 come maybe from FSIS would be relevant.

24 And to do this, we propose to work with, or
25 we suggest FSIS works with cooperative extension and

1 the state HACCP leads to disseminate this database,
2 and help processors identify the resources that they
3 need, that are appropriate for their product and
4 processes. And also, expand them to other sources,
5 right. So we have things like the Manufacturing
6 Extension Partnership Network, that does some work
7 providing food safety as well as occupational safety
8 and other types of trainings to industry.

9 And then number two, develop and maintain
10 technical resources in bite-sized formats accessible
11 by small plants, to tackle very specific regulatory
12 requirements such as verification testing, right, so
13 we have something more approachable. We know that
14 videos of three to five minutes is the most that
15 people are going to watch, if not shorter videos. So
16 having something that is more accessible plants, not
17 that you just have to sit down and read a guidance
18 document, would be ideal.

19 For question number 4, we tried to answer
20 what organizations are most effective at providing
21 assistance to small and very small establishments, and
22 what can FSIS learn from these organizations to
23 enhance its own efforts to assist small and very small
24 establishments?

25 We basically said, we identified several

1 sources of technical information. Some are more
2 targeted to meat and poultry processors or to
3 regulated facilities, and some are more on the
4 consumer food safety education spectrum, but some of
5 the resources are universal that we can take from
6 different sources.

7 Many of these organizations have resources
8 only for their members, posing a financial barrier for
9 small and very small businesses to access timely and
10 relevant information. And so we also talked about, is
11 it worth belonging or paying a membership to a
12 commodity group, right. What is the cost/benefit?
13 And sometimes the cost/benefit is not ideal, although
14 these commodity boards do have resources that members
15 can access.

16 We identified multiple organizations. I
17 don't have to name them all, but university extension
18 services, professional societies, industry-driven
19 commodity groups, right. And so we have examples
20 across different species and across different
21 commodities.

22 We also have examples of grass root
23 organizations, including NGOs, the Flower Hill
24 Institute was brought up, consumer advocacy groups and
25 consumer education groups, as well as community-based

1 organizations, and lastly, the Partnership for Food
2 Safety Education and the Alliance to Stop Foodborne
3 Illness, which we know also have resources that
4 consumers and industry can use.

5 So the recommendations to FSIS for this
6 question were to one, develop and/or enhance
7 partnerships and memorandums of understanding with the
8 organizations listed above, and many others, in a
9 transparent way that increases access to information
10 by small and very small establishments.

11 And the thinking behind this is that a lot
12 of the information may be accessible to larger
13 facilities. And so we are proposing, or we are
14 suggesting FSIS be more transparent with what are the
15 resources that are specifically available for small
16 and very small facilities.

17 Develop materials based on storytelling,
18 clear, real life examples that explain the why of food
19 safety, right, or the why of the regulation, or the
20 why of something, thus enforcing food safety culture.

21 Promote collaborative food safety culture,
22 avoiding regulatory action, when opportunities for
23 risk-based training and support exist. Right, and so
24 that basically relates to people and facilities, not
25 just the FSIS, sometimes not as a resource but just as

1 a regulator, so maybe changing that kind of thinking.

2 And then lastly, build the capacity to
3 further expand in support of the work of the Ask FSIS
4 and the Small Plant Help Desk -- this was one of our
5 strongest points that we discussed heavily. Basically
6 what we propose is to better integrate these two
7 resources, to increase funding and staffing for
8 reduced response time.

9 We know that these resources exist, but that
10 you may not get an answer in a timely fashion, and
11 then to separate education and training from
12 regulatory compliance, which is what I mentioned
13 before.

14 Okay. Moving on to question number 5, what
15 concrete actions can FSIS take, alone or in
16 partnership with stakeholders, to more effectively aid
17 existing facilities in underserved communities? The
18 subcommittee discussed various specific actions that
19 FSIS can take to more effectively support regulatory
20 compliance of these very small and small
21 establishments.

22 Trust and transparency were mentioned
23 several times during the discussion. Some members of
24 the subcommittee felt strongly that there is a culture
25 of fear of the FSIS inspection process, due to

1 inherent power dynamics, that may hinder processors
2 from seeking federal inspection or from successfully
3 remaining under federal inspection.

4 And so the concrete actions that we propose
5 are to unify, or standardize the food safety messages
6 in training for inspectors, as well as training
7 processors. And so that when everybody's speaking the
8 same language, this will reduce confusion, clarify
9 expectations and facilitate conversations between
10 industry and FSIS inspection personnel.

11 Number two, we propose or suggest to
12 facilitate and expand regional listening sessions,
13 town halls and summits to better integrate the small
14 and very small industry with the FSIS mission and the
15 message, as well as to streamline communication with
16 regulators. And again, this comes down to developing
17 that positive and mature food safety culture across
18 the food chain, right, and so that the regulator is an
19 active participant of developing that food safety
20 culture.

21 Create a quarterly newsletter that can be
22 distributed to the IPP, or to IPP personnel, or IPP
23 staff, who can then report directly to the regulated
24 facilities during their weekly meeting and inform of
25 regulatory updates, webinars, and new resources that

1 may be available for small and very small facilities.

2 And lastly, immediate action is recommended
3 to improve the capacity of the Small Plant Help Desk
4 to provide support to facilities in a timely fashion,
5 which is what I discussed in question number 4.

6 The last few things that I would like to
7 share come from question 6, what are the -- any
8 additional thoughts or recommendations that we would
9 like to share? So final comments from the
10 subcommittee revolved around equity aspects of
11 regulatory compliance and federal inspection, for
12 example, inequalities in FSIS overtime policies that
13 put additional financial burden on small and very
14 small facilities, especially in rural America.

15 So the final thoughts, or recommendations
16 for the FSIS were to explore ways to reduce the burden
17 of testing carried by small and very small
18 establishments by leveraging FSIS testing results to
19 support the company's food safety management systems.

20 Number two, we suggest to incentivize the
21 presence of inspectors and workers, FSIS workers in
22 rural and disadvantaged areas of the United States,
23 number 3, to reduce the financial burden of inspection
24 on small and very small plants by reviewing overtime
25 charges, recognizing the lower volume of production of

1 these facilities, and the challenges with splitting
2 charges between operations.

3 And lastly, we propose to enforce
4 regulations in a more consistent and equitable way
5 across all FSIS districts.

6 And with that, that is the report of
7 Subcommittee B on facilities that are currently under
8 FSIS inspection. Any comments or questions?

9 MS. GALLIMORE: Casey Gallimore with the
10 North American Meat Institute. Just out of interest,
11 I notice the Small Plant Help Desk was on here a
12 couple of times, and I don't disagree with that, but
13 was there discussion on the subcommittee from those
14 with experience on how long that's currently taking
15 for people to get a response?

16 DR. CHAVES: Yeah. I can let maybe some of
17 my fellow subcommittee members respond to those, to
18 that question, for Casey.

19 MR. ROBINETTE: This is Patrick at Micro
20 Summit. Yes, we did discuss that, because through our
21 experiences of actually using it, where you could be
22 days, weeks, for having a response. As we discussed,
23 the problem with the plants is not the action of what
24 you did wrong, it's always reaction. And while you
25 wait for a response the, you know, IPP gets very

1 frustrated.

2 MS. GALLIMORE: Thank you. That's helpful
3 context.

4 DR. CHAVES: Thanks, Patrick.

5 Any other questions or comments?

6 (No response.)

7 DR. CHAVES: I also have to say I had a
8 phenomenal group of people to work with, so thank you
9 all for your input.

10 DR. ROGERS: Hi Byron. This is Jim Rogers
11 from Consumer Reports. It looks like that a number of
12 your findings and recommendations over, I mean,
13 overlap with ours.

14 DR. CHAVES: Yeah.

15 DR. ROGERS: I mean, I'm hoping that USDA
16 will consider both sets of recommendations and see
17 where there's commonalities, and that might ease the
18 implementation of some of these recommendations.

19 DR. CHAVES: Yeah. I agree. When I was
20 listening to James do the report, you know, I was
21 thinking we have a lot of these things in common, and
22 so I do hope that by identifying those needs, that it
23 will be easier for FSIS to maybe identify what's what
24 too.

25 I don't see any other comments or questions,

1 nothing in the chat, so I'll turn it over to Katrina.

2 MS. GREEN: (Indiscernible)? Was that
3 someone with a question, or comment?

4 (No response.)

5 MS. GREEN: Okay. I'll proceed.

6 DR. WILLIAMS: I'm sorry. Byron Williams.
7 I just wanted to reiterate the point of recommendation
8 of a central repository, recommendation for resources
9 or scientific articles. I think that is of utmost
10 importance, to have a consistency of the types of
11 scientific validation and verification resources.

12 And whether USDA were to farm that out to
13 others, but I think that would go a very long way in
14 providing consistency across all operations, as long
15 as the sources are similar to what's being done in the
16 actual facility, and provide a variation of those
17 resources so that a small plant could find one that
18 fits what they need to do.

19 DR. CHAVES: Thank you. We discussed that a
20 lot, and we agree with you. That was one of our
21 strongest points.

22 There is a question in the chat that says,
23 "Please define the reason for not agreeing to federal
24 inspection standards." I don't know exactly what that
25 means, if that question is directed to me, or to whom,

1 but maybe somebody can chime in, in the chat. And I
2 think I'm done with the reporting.

3 DR. ESTEBAN: Byron, this is Emilio --
4 sorry, Under Secretary Esteban, I'm sorry. I think
5 that question from Pat Duck (ph.) was addressed to the
6 previous work group.

7 DR. CHAVES: Okay.

8 DR. ESTEBAN: It was like about open up, or
9 evening out the market so that people could actually
10 do state inspections, and so that interstate --

11 DR. CHAVES: Oh, across state lines, yeah.
12 Okay. I remember. Yeah. She says, "The question's
13 for Committee 1."

14 DR. DILLON: I can field that, if you'd
15 like. You know, I'm Director of Meat and Poultry
16 Inspection for the State of Texas, and I think we have
17 potentially the largest and certainly one of the
18 largest state meat and poultry inspection programs in
19 the country. And we observe a lot of establishments
20 struggle with that decision, about whether they grow,
21 and go under federal inspection, or whether they
22 decide not to do that, to stay under state inspection.

23 Our program and every other state inspection
24 program in the country is audited by the federal state
25 audit staff every year. And they certify that our

1 programs are at least equal to FSIS. So there is no
2 food safety reason to prohibit those products being in
3 interstate commerce. But it is undeniable that
4 businesses are facing that decision every single day.

5 And the fact that so many businesses -- as I
6 mentioned earlier, in Texas there are more very small
7 establishments under state inspection than federal
8 inspection. So many of those businesses choose to
9 remain under state inspection and accept the
10 limitations on their growth beyond the borders of
11 their given state.

12 That shows that state programs are doing
13 something right. And those -- given that there are
14 not significant food safety differences between state
15 programs and the federal inspection program, I would
16 argue that those things that state programs are doing
17 right may be in the very areas of outreach and
18 engagement that FSIS is asking this committee to
19 address in our meetings.

20 And so I think that is the primary driver,
21 just the proof is in the pudding, that there are a lot
22 of establishments that make that choice, and that they
23 are prohibited from growth outside the boundaries of
24 their state, just by where that line is drawn.

25 DR. HARRIS: This is Joe Harris. And to add

1 to Dr. Dillon's comments, I agree with all of them.
2 They are very true. Being located in Texas and
3 working with a lot of Texas companies, he's right on
4 target.

5 The other thing we hear from them, there are
6 some that might be interested in becoming federal to
7 ship interstate, but because they have older
8 facilities where certain facility design and
9 components were grandfathered in under their state
10 inspection, if they apply for a new federal grant of
11 inspection, the facility upgrades would come at a
12 very, very significant cost.

13 DR. DILLON: I think that would conclude the
14 response to that question. And maybe we should turn
15 things back over to our host, to move on to a vote on
16 the second set of recommendations.

17 DR. CHAVES: Any final questions for
18 Subcommittee B, that we can help answer?

19 (No response.)

20 DR. CHAVES: Okay. Thanks everybody.

21 MS. GREEN: Thanks again. If there are no
22 further questions or deliberations, then we will
23 proceed, but I do want to confirm before I proceed,
24 are there any additional questions or comments
25 regarding Group B?

1 (No response.)

2 MS. GREEN: Okay. With there being nothing
3 further, we will proceed with the vote. We will
4 follow the same process that we used with Group A. We
5 will first attempt to adopt the recommendations by
6 acclamation, versus going name by name for their vote.
7 If this fails, we'll proceed directly to a roll call,
8 to complete the vote.

9 So, with that being said, is there a motion
10 to adopt the recommendations for assistance to
11 businesses currently under FSIS inspection?

12 MR. ROBINETTE: This is Patrick. I make the
13 motion.

14 MS. GREEN: Please provide your last name.

15 MR. ROBINETTE: Patrick Robinette, Micro
16 Summit.

17 MS. GREEN: Thank you. Is there a second?

18 DR. CHAVES: This is Byron Chaves from the
19 University of Nebraska, I second.

20 MS. GREEN: Okay. Is there any opposition?

21 (No response.)

22 MS. GREEN: Okay, seeing none, the
23 recommendations are accepted as submitted.

24 We're a little bit early on our schedule,
25 which is okay. I know you all have had a lot of work

1 that you completed over the last two days and I thank
2 you very much for all of your support and for NACMPI,
3 and all of the hard work. So, at this time I will now
4 turn the meeting over to Dr. Emilio Esteban for
5 closing remarks. Thank you.

6 DR. ESTEBAN: Well, good afternoon, again,
7 and I want to thank the committee members for the hard
8 work you've done over the last two days. These --
9 sometimes when we do these committees, you know, we
10 ask questions, and I've been told once by attorneys
11 that you never ask a question that you don't already
12 know the answer to.

13 And so, we don't know the answers to things,
14 and so we ask the questions. And now we're stuck with
15 your answers. And we are going to hear, and listen,
16 and digest them attentively. I think it's been a good
17 discussion. I think you've been very candid in what I
18 heard today, in this closing discussion.

19 This Agency, and in fact the Department is
20 really focused on equity accessibility to all our
21 stakeholders. And if you pair that with my vision of
22 a transparent organization, I think the committee's
23 recommendations will be a major, major element in how
24 we evolve our approach, and adjust to seek to accept
25 all these inputs into a current food safety landscape.

1 Hearing the discussions and hearing your
2 recommendations, you provided us with a lot to think
3 about, and a lot that we need to really, really
4 digest. Some of the changes that you suggested are
5 statutory in nature. It will take time and work with
6 a lot of other entities to achieve them. Some we can
7 take on in a shorter term.

8 So again, we will continue to look to all
9 our stakeholders for input. We will do this openly
10 and transparently. I look forward to convening this
11 committee again next year. And I really once again
12 would like thank you, and especially, the interpreter.
13 Very good job. Thank you very much for this.

14 With that, I will adjourn the meeting for
15 today. Thank you very much, and hopefully see most of
16 you next year.

17 EVENT PRODUCER: That concludes our
18 conference. Thank you for using Event Services. You
19 may now disconnect.

20 (Whereupon, at 3:40 p.m., the plenary
21 meeting was concluded.)
22
23
24
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

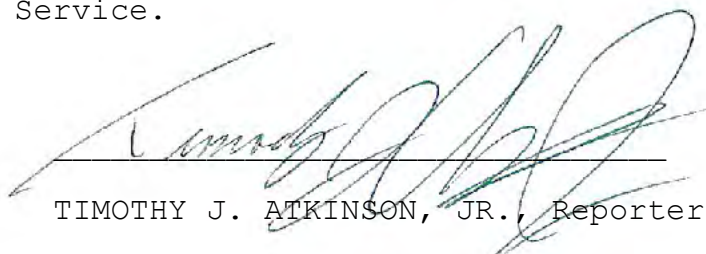
This is to certify that the attached proceedings
in the matter of:

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
MEAT AND POULTRY INSPECTION
PLENARY SESSION

Via Webex

June 22, 2023

were held as herein appears, and that this is the
original transcription thereof for the files of the
United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety
and Inspection Service.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Timothy J. Atkinson, Jr.", is written over a horizontal line.

TIMOTHY J. ATKINSON, JR., Reporter
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