

**Report of Sub-Committee Number 2**

**Chair: Dr. Joseph Harris**

The subcommittee generally supports the Agency's current triad of import oversight activities. The subcommittee strongly encourages additional and continuous improvements to FSIS implementation of its domestic and import programs and recommends the Agency work diligently with exporting countries to encourage their continuous improvements in compliance, data sharing, and transparency.

**1. What recommendations does the committee have regarding the objective evaluation of outcomes of a meat, poultry, and egg products safety system to determine if equivalence is achieved and maintained?**

**a.) What objective outcomes are most appropriate to evaluate?**

Safe, clean, wholesome, unadulterated, properly labeled products

Exporting country should be able to demonstrate:

- hazard control measures (physical, chemical, biological)
- ensure sanitary operations
- testing/verification programs
- effective government oversight with enforcement provisions
- programs established to prevent adulterated products
- commitment to science based approach taking risk into account

**b.) What means are most appropriate for evaluating objective outcomes? For example, third party audits and how this information can be utilized by FSIS.**

Self-assessments

Subcommittee sees a potential supplementary role for third-party audits as an enhancement to the current system in some situations. Third party audit can be government or private, depending on individual situation.

**2. Countries vary with information-sharing capabilities and compliance history in demonstrating equivalence. What recommendations does the committee have regarding the effects that information sharing and compliance history should have on audits and re-inspection?**

**a.) Should in-country audits be adjusted by scope and frequency based on the capability of a country to share useful information and its compliance history? If yes, how should it be adjusted?**

Subcommittee believes that the scope and frequency of in-country audits should be adjusted based on consideration of the following:

- transparency of the exporting country's food safety system and outcomes
- exporting country's on-going ability and willingness to share data, and the quality of data shared

- compliance history

The subcommittee suggests a three-tiered system may be appropriate. Standardized application of the audit criteria will be important to the success of a tiered approach.

**b.) Should routine and directed re-inspection be adjusted by frequency based on the capability of a country to share useful information and its compliance history? If yes, how should it be adjusted?**

Subcommittee believes that the frequency of routine and directed re-inspection should be adjusted based on the same factors as in 2(a) above.

Consideration should also be given to the characteristics (process category) of the specific product being imported.