



United States Department of Agriculture

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National Advisory Committee Provides Guidance to FSIS on Topical Issues

By Daniel P. Puzo, Director, Outreach and Partnership Division

USDA has several national advisory committees comprised of a cross-section of constituents that provide insight into pressing issues that confront its various Agencies. The National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI) is the group that offers advice and counsel to the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS).

NACMPI is composed of a diverse, national panel of experts representing academia, industry, state governments and consumer groups and convenes annually to review and recommend strategies or tactics on major issues facing the Agency.

Established in 1971 by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, NACMPI is chartered to provide guidance to FSIS on timely meat, poultry, and processed egg inspection developments or topics.

Members are selected by the Secretary of Agriculture and serve 2 year terms. On occasion, members may volunteer to serve an additional term if chosen to do so by the Agency. Nominations for membership are solicited every 2 years as well and recruited based on their food safety expertise.

The nomination process is open to the public and publicized in the "Federal Register," in an Agency press release, in "Constituent Update," and online at www.fsis.usda.gov.

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The Committee meets each year in Washington for 2 days to hear Agency progress made on prior year's recommendations and then breaks into two subcommittees to address subject matters most pressing for the Agency since the last NACMPI meeting. FSIS subject matter experts are on hand during the subcommittees deliberations in order to fully brief members on the background of various issues and answer any questions that may surface.

In 2015, NACMPI addressed two topics: Evaluation and Management of Chemical Hazards within the National Residue Program (NRP); and the FSIS and USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) Cost Calculation Model for specific foodborne illnesses in the United States. We'll take an in-depth look at the NRP in this issue.

After the briefing, the subcommittee members deliberate until they agree on a path or process for FSIS to follow in response to the queries before it. NACMPI recommendations are then sent to the Secretary of Agriculture for further review and, ultimately, adoption or revision.

NACMPI meetings are open to the public and transcripts of all proceedings are also available at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations/advisory-committees/nacmpi>.

This year, the NACMPI convened again in Washington on March 29 and 30 in the Patriots Plaza III auditorium, located at 355 E Street SW, Washington, D.C. For more information on the agenda and topics, please contact Natasha Williams at (202) 690-6531 or electronically at natasha.williams@fsis.usda.gov.

Nominations for the NACMPI's 2016-2018 term are expected to be solicited this fall. Information on the NACMPI nomination process can be found at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations/advisory-committees/nacmpi/nacmpi-nominations>.

USDA Advisors Weigh In on FSIS National Residue Program

By Kaitlin Keller, Program Specialist, Outreach and Partnership Division



At its 2015 meeting, NACMPI addressed "Evaluation and Management of Chemical Hazards within the National Residue Program (NRP)."

The NRP dictates when FSIS in-plant sampling processes occur. The program, in place for more than 47 years, is the laboratory sampling method by which FSIS evaluates more than 200,000 domestic and imported meat and poultry samples annually for potential contaminants.

Veterinary drugs, pesticides, and heavy metals are the primary

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targets for the lab tests. NRP is made up of two components:

- FSIS inspector-generated sampling, which generally targets potential veterinary drug misuse; and
- Scheduled surveillance samples that provide a big-picture view of the industry and whether any problems may be emerging.

In 2012, less than 1 percent of domestic samples had residue violations.

The NRP was revamped significantly in 2012 to nearly triple domestic scheduled samples, use more efficient analytical methods to test each sample for multiple residues and reduce resources for import re-inspection. The revised program was presented to NACMPI by Patricia Bennett, then Deputy Director of the Science Staff within the FSIS Office of Public Health Science.

“I think the purpose of the surveillances — [or] of all the chemical hazards we might worry about — is how do we look at it in such a way that if something out of play would we capture it?” Bennett said. The question to the Advisory Committee therefore, she said, was, “Do we have it right?” referencing the number of samples, target products, and chemical hazards.

NACMPI approved of the updated direction the program has taken, supporting the domestic and import program sampling allocations and the emphasis on known chemical hazards as they currently exist. The Committee commended FSIS for its advances in detection methods and encouraged the Agency to devote resources to the program as needed to continue to improve technologies as they are introduced.

In-depth discussion focused on the domestic scheduled sampling allocation across slaughter classes and establishment sizes. This approach tests 800 samples annually from each of the nine major slaughter classes that account for 95 percent of all meat consumed. The slaughter classes are beef cows, dairy cows, steers, heifers, bob veal, market hogs, sows, young chickens, and young turkeys.

Sampling is also volume-weighted; so the more a plant produces, the more likely it is to be sampled. Small plants may be selected for sampling less often; but they are not exempt from the program.

NACMPI members debated alternative approaches, but ultimately agreed that the volume-based selection is most representative of likely consumer exposure.

The Committee also provided recommendations to improve the effectiveness and public profile of the NRP, primarily focusing on regulatory coordination and stakeholder communication.

Recommendations for FSIS included:

- Incorporate States’ residue program data into NRP analyses and evaluate if more data should be collected from small plants;
- Periodically review inspectors’ training on sampling protocols to ensure consistency across districts and establishment size;
- More effectively communicate the NRP mission and share program data with stakeholders;
- Develop a process for determining if new detection methods need to be developed;
- Identify when new hazards should be incorporated into the program; and
- Consider potential differences between the United States and its trading partners.

Betsy Booren of the North American Meat Institute said, “I don’t think people know what it is, and I think part of the challenge...was understanding what’s being done and why it’s being done. And I think one of the recommendations I would make to the Secretary would be a clear concise way of explaining this program to stakeholders.”

Since NACMPI reviewed the NRP, FSIS has developed an action plan to address NACMPI’s recommendations and is currently implementing them. Specific emphasis

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Commonly Asked Questions & Answers

Q: What is the application process for becoming a member of the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI)?

A: We are currently working to recruit new members of NACMPI. The nomination criteria and background are:

- Persons from industry; State and Federal government; public health, scientific, and academic communities; and consumers and consumer organizations, as well as all other interested persons are invited to submit nominations. Self-nominations are welcome.
- To ensure that recommendations of the Committee take into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership will include, to the extent practicable, persons with demonstrated ability to represent minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.
- The full Committee consists of no more than 20 members, and each person selected is expected to serve a 2 year term. Members are limited to two consecutive terms (maximum 4 years).
- Please click on the link to see the Federal Register Notice for additional details on this Committee and how to apply. The Federal Register Notice can be found at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations/federal-register>.
- Please share this information with others who may have an interest. If you have any questions, please contact Natasha Williams at Natasha.Williams@fsis.usda.gov or (202) 690-6531.

Please feel free to submit any suggestions for topics you would like to see covered in the *Small Plant News* to *Small Plant News*, USDA/FSIS, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Mailstop 3778, Patriots Plaza III, Rm. 9-265A, Washington, DC 20250, or via email to SmallPlantNews@fsis.usda.gov.

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was placed on reviewing FSIS inspector training, ensuring consistent implementation and revising guidance to inspection program personnel if needed to increase efficiencies within the program.

To review the recommendations by the Committee in their entirety, as well as meeting materials and transcripts, visit: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations/advisory-committees/nacmpi>.

For any questions or additional information, contact the Small Plant Help Desk, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 am- 5:00 pm EST. You can also reach the Help Desk any time by email at infosource@fsis.usda.gov.

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