

Minutes of the National Advisory Committee
on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) Plenary Session
August 27, 2004

Hotel Monaco
700 F Street, NW
Washington, DC

Dr. Robert Brackett, Director, Food and Drug Administration/Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (FDA/CFSAN), Vice-Chair, started the meeting at 8:30 AM, Friday, August 27, and provided opening remarks.

Reports from the Subcommittee Chairs/Presentation of Documents for Adoption

Dr. David Acheson, filling in for the Subcommittee Chair Dr. Don Zink, Criteria for Refrigerated Shelf-life Based on Safety, summarized the Subcommittee's work and presented the group's document to the Full Committee for consideration of adoption. After deliberations, the document entitled: "Considerations for Establishing Safety-Based Consume-By Date Labels for Refrigerated Ready-to-Eat Foods" was adopted with changes (1st motion by Dane Bernard 2nd motion by Bruce Tompkin).

Dr. John Kvenberg, Subcommittee Chair, Scientific Criteria for Redefining Pasteurization, presented a brief overview of the group's charge and document. The meeting adjourned for forty-five minutes to afford the Full Committee time to review the document: "Requisite Scientific Parameters for Establishing the Equivalence of Alternative Methods of Pasteurization".

At the close of the above document review period, Dr. Merle Pierson, Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety, Chair, addressed the Committee summarizing the accomplishments of the 2002-2004 NACMCF session. The Chair commended the group for their hard work, contributions and scientific analysis in support of the Nation's food safety programs. He also informed the group of his recommendations to standardize the format of NACMCF documents and to publish these works in scientific journals.

Dr. John Kvenberg, Subcommittee Chair, Scientific Criteria for Redefining Pasteurization resumed discussions of the group's document. After deliberations the document was adopted with changes (1st motion by Jenny Scott, 2nd motion by Stephanie Doores).

Mr. Spencer Garrett, Chair, Subcommittee on Microbiological Performance Standards for Ground Chicken/Ground Turkey took the floor and indicated that his group brought two documents for consideration of adoption covering performance standards for ground chicken and ground turkey, respectively. He also explained how his Subcommittee moved through a series of documents on performance standards covering different raw commodities (ground beef, ground products, [broilers]). The documents have paralleled

one another, but they have reflected the specific processing and public health concerns for each of these raw products.

Mr. Garrett first presented the report “NACMCF Response To The Questions Posed By FSIS Regarding Performance Standards With Particular Reference To Raw Ground Chicken”. After deliberations, the document was adopted with changes (1st motion by John Sofos, 2nd motion by Jenny Scott).

Mr. Garrett then presented the report: “NACMCF Response to the Questions Posed by FSIS Regarding Performance Standards with Particular Reference to Raw Ground Turkey”. Dr. Jenny Scott made a motion that all the previous Full Committee modifications made to the ground chicken document that also applied to ground turkey should be made to this ground turkey document. In deliberations this was agreed upon and the ground turkey document was adopted with changes (1st motion by Jenny Scott, 2nd motion by Peggy Cook).

Public Comment

Mr. Nick De Pinto, AVURE Technologies, Eastern Regional Sales Manager, indicated his interests were on the scientific parameters for establishing the equivalence of alternative methods of pasteurization. He referred the group to the last paragraph on page 46 of the draft redefining pasteurization document which reads: “More research is needed to develop label statements that are understood by consumers.” He said that in his company’s and his own personal experience, that consumers desire a full disclosure, especially on non-conventional processing methods. He stated that if the label pasteurization is to be used for non-thermal processes, then the label should include a modifier such as “pasteurized with high pressure or alternative technologies”. He also mentioned that the definition of pasteurization should not exclude the “fresh” descriptor, as fresh can be effectively used to communicate a higher level of quality.

Mr. Tony Corbo, Public Citizen, Legislative Representative, commended the redefining pasteurization Subcommittee on their work, and thanked the group for allowing him to participate in the process during meetings. He mentioned that he brought the Subcommittee information on a couple of focus groups that FDA and USDA did on irradiation and its equivalence to pasteurization. He said that Dr. Brackett mentioned that FDA plans rule making and Mr. Corbo indicated his group hopes to revisit the issue of consumer research. Mr. Corbo stated that there needs to be a lot of consumer research in order to gain consumer acceptance of some of these alternative technologies and defining them as pasteurization (especially irradiation).

Mr. Peter Jenkins, Center for Food Safety, who identified himself as an attorney and Policy Analyst, stated that his group is non-profit and has worked quite a bit on irradiation. They are concerned about the issue of describing irradiated foods as pasteurized. He mentioned that they have generally endorsed Public Citizen in this area. He also mentioned that his group has fought the Bill in Congress and they will continue to do so. He stated that he disagrees with Mr. Corbo, regarding consumer research. He

said polls indicate that consumers don't want the word pasteurized to be watered down or somehow changed in the way that it's used on products so that they can't trust the word pasteurized anymore. He has also seen indications that focus groups have shown that the consumer response to irradiation and calling products pasteurized has been almost 100% negative. He closed by thanking the group for their work and urged as rule-making moves forward that some of these broader concerns be taken into account.

Close

Dr. Merle Pierson adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:00 PM Friday August 27, 2004.

A list of NACMCF members in attendance and outside participants follows. Further meeting details are available in the 8-27-04 meeting transcripts.

8-27-04 NACMCF Meeting Participants

Chair:	Dr. Merle Pierson
Vice-Chair:	Dr. Robert Brackett
NACMCF Members:	Dr. David Acheson Mr. Dane Bernard Dr. Peggy Cook Dr. Catherine Donnelly Dr. Stephanie Doores Dr. Frances Downes Dr. Dan Engeljohn Mr. Spencer Garrett Dr. Patricia Griffin Dr. Lee-Ann Jaykus MAJ. Robin King Dr. John Kvenberg Dr. Anna Lammerding Dr. John Luchansky Dr. Carol Maddox Dr. Eli Perencevich Ms. Angela Ruple Ms. Jenny Scott Dr. Skip Seward Dr. John Sofos Dr. Katie Swanson Dr. R. Bruce Tompkin

NACMCF Executive Committee:	Dr. LeeAnne Jackson, FDA LTC. Bradford Hildabrand, DOD
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FSIS Staff:	Ms. Gerri Ransom Ms. Karen Thomas
FDA Staff:	Mr. Brett Podoski
NMFS Staff:	Ms. Emille Cole Ms. Barbara Comstock
Outside Participants:	Mr. Nick De Pinto, Avure Technologies Mr. Tony Corbo, Public Citizen Mr. Peter Jenkins, Center for Food Safety