

Facsimile Cover Sheet



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*Food
Safety -
Salmonella*

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Pages (Including cover sheet) 8

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CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S NEW FOOD SAFETY INSPECTION SYSTEM REDUCES THREAT OF SALMONELLA

Preliminary Data Show Decline in Potentially Harmful Bacteria

WASHINGTON, September 28, 1998--The Clinton Administration's new, prevention-oriented meat and poultry inspection system has nearly cut in half the proportion of broiler chickens contaminated with salmonella -- and greatly reduced the frequency of salmonella in pork, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced today. These data, while preliminary, indicate that the Administration's science-based inspection system, introduced in 1996, is already having a significant impact on the safety of food American families eat.

"This important piece of evidence demonstrates that the Administration's new, science-based food safety system is helping to further protect American families from foodborne illness," Glickman said.

Salmonella is a potentially deadly bacteria that sickens as many as 3.84 million Americans and costs billions of dollars in lost productivity and medical costs each year.

Initial testing in large plants indicates that salmonella, found on 20 percent of broiler chickens before implementation of the new Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points inspection system (HACCP), was found on only 10.4 percent of chickens during testing earlier this year. And salmonella was found in only 5.5 percent of swine from plants that had implemented HACCP; 8.7 percent had tested positive previously. Today's results stem from testing conducted over a six-month period earlier this year, after implementation of HACCP in large plants. Insufficient data have been collected to allow similar conclusions for other species and products.

HACCP, the Administration's science-based meat and poultry inspection system, is a revolutionary approach to food safety. The system is designed to reduce risks by identifying potential hazards and implementing control measures to effectively address them. It also mandates tough, new sanitation procedures for all meat and poultry plants.

"Today's good news underscores the important role government plays in promoting public health," said Glickman. "But we must not rest on our laurels. We must continue to do even more. For starters, Congress should fully fund the President's National Food Safety Initiative."

The Clinton Administration's comprehensive, farm-to-table approach to food safety has included the following actions.

- Launching an unprecedented National Food Safety Initiative with new funds to expand cutting-edge food safety research, enhanced inspections, and consumer education.

- Creating a Joint Institute for Food Safety Research to strategically plan and coordinate

food safety research across all federal agencies.

Appointing a Cabinet-level Council on Food Safety to develop a national strategic plan that will identify needs, set priorities, and improve efficiency in our federal food safety efforts.

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FSIS

First Progress Report on Salmonella Testing for Raw Meat and Poultry Products

Summary

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is releasing a progress report on its first 6 months of testing for *Salmonella* in large meat and poultry plants. The final rule on Pathogen Reduction and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems set pathogen reduction performance standards for *Salmonella* that certain plants must meet, and FSIS conducts testing to verify that these standards have been met. FSIS is taking a conservative approach in interpreting and presenting this data because it is preliminary and incomplete in many ways. Nevertheless, the results are interesting as well as encouraging in light of the Agency's goal to reduce, to the extent possible, pathogens that can cause foodborne illness.

Results indicate that 88 percent of plants for which sample sets (a pre-determined number of samples) have been completed have met the *Salmonella* performance standards. Summary data indicate that *Salmonella* prevalence for broiler carcasses dropped from 20.0 percent before the Pathogen Reduction and HACCP rule was

implemented to 10.4 percent afterwards. For swine carcasses, prevalence dropped from 8.7 percent to 5.5 percent.

The data available are insufficient to generalize across the industry. However, there is a general trend toward lower percentages of products that are positive for *Salmonella*. Consumers should continue to properly handle, prepare, and store all meat, poultry, and egg products in order to guard against foodborne illness.

Background

On July 25, 1996, FSIS published its final rule on Pathogen Reduction and HACCP Systems, which established new requirements for all meat and poultry products to improve food safety. Under the rule, all slaughter and processing plants are required to adopt the system of process controls known as HACCP to prevent food safety hazards. In addition, slaughter plants are required to conduct microbial testing for generic *E. coli* to verify that their process control systems are working as intended to prevent fecal contamination, the primary

avenue of contamination for harmful bacteria. FSIS also requires plants to adopt and follow written Standard Operating Procedures for sanitation (SSOPs) to reduce the likelihood that harmful bacteria will contaminate the finished product.

In addition, to verify that HACCP systems are effective in reducing contamination from harmful bacteria, the rule sets pathogen reduction performance standards for *Salmonella* that slaughter plants and plants that produce raw, ground meat and poultry have to meet. FSIS conducts testing to verify that plants have met the standards by taking samples of the products and analyzing them for *Salmonella* in FSIS laboratories.

The requirements contained in the final rule on Pathogen Reduction and HACCP are being phased in. The requirements for generic *E. coli* testing and SSOPs became effective for all plants on January 27, 1997. The requirements for HACCP and the *Salmonella* performance standards are being phased in based on plant size. All large plants--those with 500 or more employees--were required to implement these requirements in January 1998. Large plants account for approximately 75 percent of slaughter production. Small plants--those with 10 or more, but fewer than 500 employees--must implement these requirements by January 1999. Very small plants--those having fewer than 10 employees or annual sales of less than \$2.5 million--have until January 2000 to meet these requirements. Thus, only large plants are at this time required to meet the *Salmonella* performance standards.

***Salmonella* Performance Standards and Testing Program**

The performance standards for *Salmonella* represent the first time USDA has set

microbial standards for raw products on such a broad scale and is the first step towards a greater reliance on performance standards for specific pathogens. *Salmonella* was selected as the target pathogen because it is one of the most common causes of foodborne illness, it is present at varying frequencies on all types of raw meat and poultry products, and it can easily be tested for in a variety of products.

Separate performance standards apply to each species and class of product and are listed in the final rule on Pathogen Reduction and HACCP (see section on documents available). Products covered by performance standards are carcasses of cattle, swine, and broilers, and ground beef, chicken, and turkey. However, testing has not yet started for turkey carcasses and ground pork. The pathogen reduction performance standards are based on the current prevalence of *Salmonella*, as determined from FSIS' nationwide microbial baseline surveys. Thus, the standards are based on industry averages, rather than how much *Salmonella* it takes to make someone sick. This is because the Agency does not have solid data on the relationship between rates of contamination and their association with foodborne illness. FSIS intends to adjust the standards in the future as new baseline data become available.

The standards are expressed in terms of the maximum number of positive samples that are allowed per sample set (sample sets are statistically determined and range from 51 samples for broilers to 82 samples for steers/heifers). For example, in steers and heifers, only 1 out of 82 samples is permitted to be positive. For broilers, 12 out of 51 samples are permitted to be positive. Samples are either positive or negative--the results are not expressed in terms of number of organisms found in a sample.

Plants must achieve the standard consistently over time through good process control. If a plant persistently fails to meet the standard, it must take corrective action, or FSIS suspends inspection services for the product until plant management provides written assurances that appropriate action has been taken to correct the problem.

FSIS is not using test results to condemn products. Individual test results are not meaningful because the performance standards have been established to measure performance over time. Instead, the results are being used to verify that HACCP systems are effective in reducing contamination with *Salmonella*. The presence of *Salmonella* organisms above the standard is an indication that the plant's system for preventing contamination is not working, and the plant *must* take steps to correct the problem.

Progress Report on *Salmonella* Testing

FSIS is presenting the results of the first 6 months of testing in the 178 large meat and poultry plants for which adequate data are available. "Adequate" is defined as having 10 completed sample sets. Thus, for poultry, because the data set is 51 samples, 10 data sets would total 510 samples.

Results indicate that most plants (88 percent) for which sample sets have been

completed have met the *Salmonella* performance standards. Plants failing to meet the performance standard were formally notified and required to take immediate action to comply with the requirements.

The table on page () presents the *Salmonella* summary data for swine and broiler carcasses. These are the classes of products for which the most data are available. For swine carcasses, the baseline prevalence of *Salmonella* before the Pathogen Reduction and HACCP rule was implemented was 8.7 percent. That decreased to 6.4 positive samples during the pre-HACCP implementation phase (only the standard operating procedures for sanitation and generic *E. coli* testing had been implemented) and 5.5 percent after the *Salmonella* performance standards and HACCP became effective. For broiler carcasses, the baseline prevalence was 20 percent, the pre-HACCP implementation prevalence was 16.4 percent, and the percent positive after implementation of the *Salmonella* performance standards and HACCP was 10.4 percent. Caution should be used in comparing these data because the sampling protocols, seasonal periods, and the number of plants vary among the testing phases. Nevertheless, summary data indicate a general trend toward lower percentages of products that are positive for *Salmonella*.

Summary Data from *Salmonella* Testing in Large Swine and Broiler Plants*

Testing Phase	Swine (percent positive samples)	Poultry (percent positive samples)
National baseline prevalence (before Pathogen Reduction and HACCP rule)	8.7	20.0
Before HACCP and <i>Salmonella</i> performance standards became effective (SSOPs and generic <i>E. coli</i> testing in place)	6.4	16.4
After HACCP and <i>Salmonella</i> performance standards became effective	5.5	10.4

*More detailed data are presented in *Progress Report: Pathogen Reduction Performance Standards for Salmonella, Sept. 1998* (see section on Documents Available).

Data for the other product classes--steers/heifers, ground beef, and ground turkey--were not abundant enough to make similar comparisons. However, preliminary analysis of data for ground beef suggests that the percentage of samples positive for *Salmonella* decreased as well through the testing phases.

An analysis of compliance by plant for poultry and swine indicate that 53 of 60 poultry plants met the standard, and 40 of the 53 had a *Salmonella* prevalence of less than 10 percent--well below the baseline of 20 percent. In swine, 8 of 10 plants met the standard, and all 8 had a prevalence below 5 percent--compared to a baseline prevalence of 8.7 percent.

A more complete report on *Salmonella* testing data in large plants will be available after the first year of sampling is completed.

Advice to Consumers

The data indicate a general trend toward lower percentages of broiler and swine carcasses that are positive for *Salmonella*. However, consumers should continue to properly handle, prepare, and store all meat, poultry, and egg products in order to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

Documents Available:

The following documents are available on the FSIS Web site, at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>. Copies can also be obtained by calling the Constituent Affairs Office at (202) 720-8594.

- Progress Report: Pathogen Reduction Performance Standards for *Salmonella*, Sept. 1998.
- Issue paper: Public Release of *Salmonella* Testing Results, December 15, 1997.
- Pathogen Reduction: Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems; Final Rule, 9CFR Part 304, et al., July 25, 1996.
- Appendix E to final rule (see above)—FSIS Sample Collection Guidelines and Procedure for Isolation and Identification of *Salmonella* from Raw Meat and Poultry Products.

For More Information

General inquiries:

Media- (202) 720-9113

Congressional- (202) 720-3897

Constituent- (202) 720-8594

Consumer inquiries: Call USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555.

In the Washington, DC, area, call (202) 720-3333. The TTY number is 1-800-256-7072.

Technical inquiries: Dr. William Havlik, Office of Public Health and Science, (202) 501-7568

FSIS Fast Fax: 1-800-238-8281 or (202) 690-3754

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THE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCES JOINT INSTITUTE FOR FOOD SAFETY RESEARCH AND LABELING OF FRESH JUICES

July 4, 1998

In his weekly radio address, the President will announce the publication of a final rule to improve the safety of fruit and vegetable juices. The new regulation, which will take effect in time for this year's apple cider season, will help prevent illnesses from fresh, unpasteurized juices by requiring labels on these products. In addition, the President will announce a plan to create a Joint Institute for Food Safety Research that will develop a coordinated strategy for conducting food safety research activities consistent with the President's Food Safety Initiative. Finally, the President will call on Congress to provide full funding for his Food Safety Initiative, pass vital food safety legislation, and confirm Dr. Jane E. Henney as the new FDA commissioner.

Warning Labels for Consumers. The President will announce a final rule that will require warning labels on juice products that have not been processed to reduce microbial risk. These labels will state: "WARNING: This product has not been pasteurized and, therefore, may contain harmful bacteria that can cause serious illness in children, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems." These labels will be required for all packages of untreated, fresh juices but not for juice sold for on-site consumption, such as in restaurants. The rule will be effective for this year's apple cider season. The FDA expects it to reduce significantly the incidence of juice-related illness, now estimated at up to 40,000 cases each year, including both treated and untreated juice.

Food Safety Research Institute. The President will direct the Secretaries of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to report back to him within 90 days on the creation of a Joint Institute for Food Safety Research that will: (1) develop a strategic plan for conducting food safety research activities consistent with the President's Food Safety Initiative; and (2) efficiently coordinate all Federal food safety research, including research conducted with the private sector and academia. The principal goals of this Joint Institute will be to develop the means to identify foodborne hazards more rapidly and accurately, and to develop effective interventions to prevent food contamination at each step from farm to table.

Food Safety Initiative and Legislation. The President also will call on Congress to provide full funding for his \$101 million food safety initiative, which would support a variety of measures including: hiring additional FDA inspectors to examine the safety of our nation's fruits and vegetables, both domestic and imported; developing new ways for federal inspectors to detect food-borne illnesses in meat and poultry and determine the source of contamination; improving educational outreach on proper food handling; and expanding our early warning system to help detect and respond to outbreaks of foodborne illnesses. The President also will call on Congress to pass two vital pieces of legislation to improve the safety of the nation's food supply. One bill will ensure that the FDA halts imports of fruits, vegetables, and other food products that do not meet U.S. food safety requirements or that do not provide the same level of protection as is required for U.S. products. The second bill will give USDA the authority to issue mandatory recalls and impose civil penalties for unsafe meat and poultry.

Clinton Administration Accomplishments In Improving Food Safety

The President's announcement builds on a strong record of food safety initiatives, ensuring that Americans eat the safest possible food. The Administration has put into place improved safety standards for meat, poultry, and seafood products, and has begun the process of developing enhanced standards for fruit and vegetable juices. The Administration also has expanded research, education, and surveillance activities throughout the food safety system.

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A: The FY 1999 Budget included a \$101 million increase over the FY 1998 level for the Administration's inter-agency food safety initiative. Of this total amount, \$25 million would finance FDA's improved capability to ensure the safety of imported foods and \$5 million would permit the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to assist state health departments to detect foodborne diseases and to improve foodborne disease surveillance. Another \$24 million of the Initiative would go towards: developing rapid tests for the detection of pathogens; improving slaughter and processing systems to avoid contamination of food products; and establishing baseline data to better assess the risk of contamination in the US food supply. In addition, \$7.8 million would be used to expand consumer education initiatives, especially for high risk populations (the elderly and children).

Q: **What is the status of the Food Safety Initiative in the FY 1999 Appropriation bills?**

A: So far, Congress has failed to provide full funding of the Administration's food safety initiative. The Senate Appropriations Committee provided only about \$3 million for these efforts, but the full Senate voted by a large bipartisan majority for an amendment offered by Senator Harkin to provide an additional \$66 million. Senator Harkin's amendment required USDA's tobacco program administrative costs to be partially funded by the tobacco industry, and used the savings as the major offset for the cost of expanded food safety programs for both USDA and FDA. The House-passed Agriculture Appropriations bill would provide only \$16.8 million of the requested increase: \$7 million for FDA imported food safety and \$9.8 million for USDA activities. The Administration will continue to work with the conference committee members to urge them to provide full funding for the food safety initiative. The House Labor-HHS Appropriations Committee has approved the \$5 million food safety request for CDC.

Q: **Is all of the \$101 million that the President asked for necessary for food safety?**

A: Without additional funding for the Food Safety Initiative, the federal food safety agencies will not be able fully to develop appropriate response, prevention, and control strategies for reducing the level of food-borne illness in the United States.

In addition to the funding requested to strengthen FDA's import inspection and expand USDA's and FDA's research and education activities, funding is requested to continue to improve FDA's food safety infrastructure, as started in the FY 1998 Food Safety Initiative. Also, significant resources are targeted to strengthening both USDA's and FDA's risk assessment capabilities. Risk assessment is important in helping to identify foods and processes that are most likely to lead to food-borne illness. Finally, funding is requested to expand the USDA's and HHS's ability to identify and track food-borne illnesses.

Legislative Proposals

Q: What is Clinton Administration's FDA import legislation?

A: The Administration called on Congress to pass food safety legislation, introduced by Senators Milkulski and Kennedy and Reps. Eshoo and Pallone, that gives the FDA greater authority over imported foods. This legislation will ensure that the FDA halts imports of fruits, vegetables, and other food products that do not meet U.S. food safety requirements or that come from countries that do not provide the same level of protection as is required for S. products. The legislation also enables the FDA to halt imports from a country or facility that refuses to allow FDA inspections. This legislation gives FDA authority that is similar to USDA's existing authority to prevent the importation of unsafe meat and poultry.

Q: What is the Clinton Administration's USDA mandatory recall/civil penalties legislation?

A: The Clinton Administration called on Congress to pass the Food Safety Enforcement Enhancement Act, sponsored by Senators Harkin, Daschle, Johnson, and Leahy, which gives USDA the ability to assess civil fines and to order mandatory recalls of unsafe meat and poultry products. Currently, the USDA can respond to food safety violations only by bringing criminal actions or withdrawing inspections; all recalls are done on a voluntary basis and no civil penalties are available. This new legislation will give USDA additional enforcement tools to enhance food safety.

Q: Aren't these legislative proposals essentially dead? Has Congress moved on them at all?

A: These proposals are not dead. The Administration is working with members to try to get these vital pieces of legislation passed and expects the Congressional sponsors of these measures to raise the bills on the House and Senate floors.

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Q: **Is all of the \$101 million that the President asked for necessary for food safety?**

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In addition to the funding requested to strengthen FDA's import inspection and expand USDA's and FDA's research and education activities, funding is requested to continue to improve FDA's food safety infrastructure, as started in the FY 1998 Food Safety Initiative. Also, significant resources are targeted to strengthening both USDA's and FDA's risk assessment capabilities. Risk assessment is important in helping to identify foods and processes that are most likely to lead to food-borne illness. Finally, funding is requested to expand the USDA's and HHS's ability to identify and track food-borne illnesses.

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*August 1996. President signs Safe Drinking Water Act of 1996. The law requires drinking water systems to protect against dangerous contaminants like cryptosporidium, and gives people the right to know about contaminants in their tap water.

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*July 1996. President Clinton announces new regulations that modernize the nation's meat and poultry inspection system for the first time in 90 years. New standards help prevent E.coli bacteria contamination in meat.

*December 1995. Administration issues new rules to ensure seafood safety, utilizing HACCP regulatory programs to require food industries to design and implement preventive measures and increase the industries' responsibility for and control of their safety assurance actions.

*1994. CDC embarks on strategic program to detect, prevent, and control emerging infectious disease threats, some of which are food borne, making significant progress toward this goal in each successive year.

*1993. Vice-President's National Performance Review issues report recommending government and industry move toward a system of preventive controls.

safety?

A: The FY 1999 Budget included a \$101 million increase over the FY 1998 level for the Administration's inter-agency food safety initiative. Of this total amount, \$25 million would finance FDA's improved capability to ensure the safety of imported foods and \$5 million would permit the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to assist state health departments to detect foodborne diseases and to improve foodborne disease surveillance. Another \$24 million of the Initiative would go towards: developing rapid tests for the detection of pathogens; improving slaughter and processing systems to avoid contamination of food products; and establishing baseline data to better assess the risk of contamination in the US food supply. In addition, \$7.8 million would be used to expand consumer education initiatives, especially for high risk populations (the elderly and children).

Q: What is the status of the Food Safety Initiative in the FY 1999 Appropriation bills?

A: So far, Congress has failed to provide full funding of the Administration's food safety initiative. The Senate Appropriations Committee provided only about \$3 million for these efforts, but the full Senate voted by a large bipartisan majority for an amendment offered by Senator Harkin to provide an additional \$66 million. Senator Harkin's amendment required USDA's tobacco program administrative costs to be partially funded by the tobacco industry, and used the savings as the major offset for the cost of expanded food safety programs for both USDA and FDA. The House-passed Agriculture Appropriations bill would provide only \$16.8 million of the requested increase: \$7 million for FDA imported food safety and \$9.8 million for USDA activities. The Administration will continue to work with the conference committee members to urge them to provide full funding for the food safety initiative. The House Labor-HHS Appropriations Committee has approved the \$5 million food safety request for CDC.

Q: Is all of the \$101 million that the President asked for necessary for food safety?

A: Without additional funding for the Food Safety Initiative, the federal food safety agencies will not be able fully to develop appropriate response, prevention, and control strategies for reducing the level of food-borne illness in the United States.

In addition to the funding requested to strengthen FDA's import inspection and expand USDA's and FDA's research and education activities, funding is requested to continue to improve FDA's food safety infrastructure, as started in the FY 1998 Food Safety Initiative. Also, significant resources are targeted to strengthening both USDA's and FDA's risk assessment capabilities. Risk assessment is important in helping to identify foods and processes that are most likely to lead to food-borne illness. Finally, funding is requested to expand the USDA's and HHS's ability to identify and track food-borne illnesses.

Legislative Proposals

Q: What is Clinton Administration's FDA import legislation?

A: The Administration called on Congress to pass food safety legislation, introduced by Senators Milkulski and Kennedy and Reps. Eshoo and Pallone, that gives the FDA greater authority over imported foods. This legislation will ensure that the FDA halts imports of fruits, vegetables, and other food products that do not meet U.S. food safety requirements or that come from countries that do not provide the same level of protection as is required for S. products. The legislation also enables the FDA to halt imports from a country or facility that refuses to allow FDA inspections. This legislation gives FDA authority that is similar to USDA's existing authority to prevent the importation of unsafe meat and poultry.

Q: What is the Clinton Administration's USDA mandatory recall/civil penalties legislation?

A: The Clinton Administration called on Congress to pass the Food Safety Enforcement Enhancement Act, sponsored by Senators Harkin, Daschle, Johnson, and Leahy, which gives USDA the ability to assess civil fines and to order mandatory recalls of unsafe meat and poultry products. Currently, the USDA can respond to food safety violations only by bringing criminal actions or withdrawing inspections; all recalls are done on a voluntary basis and no civil penalties are available. This new legislation will give USDA additional enforcement tools to enhance food safety.

Q: Aren't these legislative proposals essentially dead? Has Congress moved on them at all?

A: These proposals are not dead. The Administration is working with members to try to get these vital pieces of legislation passed and expects the Congressional sponsors of these measures to raise the bills on the House and Senate floors.

Quotes

Data

The data shows the great promise of a science based approach to food safety. It shows we may be able to prevent thousands of illnesses if we continue to invest our resources wisely.

Hill funds

The money goes for taking the crucial next steps in improving food safety: inspections of imports, surveillance, and research.

Politics

There is no reason for food safety to be a political issue. We're hopeful that the conference will fully-fund the president's initiative.

Is it a serious problem?

We urgently need to get better data. That is part of the initiative. There is no doubt that it is a real problem and we need to stay ahead of it.

08/10/98 FAX 202-690-1111
DRAFT

Backgrounder:
September 1998
(Danielle Schor)

DRAFT

Progress Report on *Salmonella* Testing for Raw Meat and Poultry Products

Background

On July 25, 1996, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) published its final rule on Pathogen Reduction and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems, which established new requirements for all meat and poultry products to improve food safety.

Under the rule, all slaughter and processing plants are required to adopt the system of process controls to prevent food safety hazards known as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). In addition, slaughter plants are required to conduct microbial testing for generic *E. coli* to verify that their process control systems are working as intended to prevent fecal contamination, the primary avenue of contamination for harmful bacteria. FSIS also requires plants to adopt and follow written Standard Operating Procedures for sanitation (SSOPs) to reduce the likelihood that harmful bacteria will contaminate the finished product.

In addition, to verify that HACCP systems are effective in reducing contamination with harmful bacteria, the rule sets pathogen reduction performance standards for *Salmonella* that slaughter plants and plants that produce raw, ground meat and poultry have to meet. FSIS conducts testing to verify that plants have met the standards.

The requirements contained in the final rule on Pathogen Reduction and HACCP are being phased in. The requirements for generic *E. coli* testing and Standard Operating Procedures for Sanitation became effective for all plants on January 27, 1997. The requirements for HACCP and the *Salmonella* performance standards are being phased in based on plant size. All large plants--those with 500 or more employees--were required to implement these requirements in January 1998. Large plants account for approximately 75 percent of slaughter production. Small plants--those with 10 or more, but fewer than 500, employees--must implement these requirements by January 1999. Very small plants--those having fewer than 10 employees or annual sales of less than \$2.5 million--have until January 2000 to meet these requirements.

Salmonella Performance Standards and Testing Program

The performance standards for *Salmonella* represent the first time USDA has set microbial standards on such a broad scale and is the first step towards a greater reliance in the future on performance standards for specific pathogens. *Salmonella* was selected as the target pathogen because it is one of the most common causes of foodborne illness, it is present at varying frequencies on all types of raw meat and poultry products, and it can easily be tested for in a variety of products.

Separate performance standards apply to each species and class of product and are listed in the final rule on Pathogen Reduction and HACCP (see section on documents available). Products

covered by performance standards are cattle, swine, broiler carcasses, ground beef, ground chicken, and ground turkey. The pathogen reduction performance standards are based on the current prevalence of *Salmonella*, as determined from FSIS' nationwide microbial baseline surveys. Thus, the standards are based on industry averages, rather than how much *Salmonella* it takes to make someone sick. This is because the Agency does not have solid data on the relationship between rates of contamination and their association with foodborne illness. FSIS intends to adjust the standards in the future, as better data become available.

The standards are expressed in terms of the maximum number of positive samples that are allowed per sample set (sample sets are statistically determined and range from 51 samples for broilers to 82 samples for steers/heifers). For example, in steers and heifers, only 1 out of 82 samples is permitted to be positive. For broilers, 12 out of 51 samples are permitted to be positive. Samples are either positive or negative—they are not expressed in terms of number of organisms found in a sample.

Samples are taken by USDA inspectors at the plants and shipped to FSIS laboratories for testing. One sample is taken per day at each plant. Plants must achieve the standard consistently over time through good process control. If a plant fails to meet the standard, it must take corrective action or FSIS suspends inspection services for the product until plant management provides written assurances that appropriate action has been taken to correct the problem.

FSIS is not using test results to condemn products. The results are being used to verify that HACCP systems are effective in reducing contamination with *Salmonella*. The presence of *Salmonella* organisms above the standard is an indication that the plant's system for preventing contamination is not working.

Progress Report on *Salmonella* Testing

FSIS is presenting the results of the first six months of testing in the 178 large meat and poultry plants for which adequate data are available. "Adequate" is defined as having 10 completed sample sets. Thus, for poultry, 10 data sets would equal 510 samples.

Results indicate that most plants for which sample sets have been completed are in compliance with the *Salmonella* performance standards. The data available are insufficient to generalize across the industry. However, summary data indicate a general trend toward lower percentages of products that are positive for *Salmonella*.

The table below presents the *Salmonella* data for swine and broiler carcasses. These are the classes of products for which the most data are available. For swine carcasses, the baseline prevalence of *Salmonella* before any changes were made was 8.7 percent. That decreased to 6.4 percent positive samples during the pre-implementation phase (only the Standard Operating Procedures for Sanitation and generic *E. coli* testing had been implemented) and 5.5 percent after the *Salmonella* performance standards and HACCP became effective. For broiler carcasses, the baseline prevalence was 20 percent, the pre-implementation prevalence was 16.4 percent, and the percent positive after implementation of the *Salmonella* performance standards and HACCP was 10.4 percent. These data indicate continued progress toward pathogen reduction at the various

stages of implementation of the final rule on Pathogen Reduction and HACCP. However, caution should be used in comparing these data because the sampling periods and number of plants vary among the testing phases.

Summary Data from *Salmonella* Testing in Large Swine and Broiler Plants*

Testing Phase	Swine (percent positive samples)	Poultry (percent positive samples)
National baseline prevalence	8.7	20.0
Before HACCP Implementation (SSOPs and generic <i>E. coli</i> testing in place)	6.4	16.4
After HACCP implementation	5.5	10.4

*More detailed data are presented in *Progress Report: Pathogen Reduction Performance Standards for Salmonella, Sept. 1998* (see section on Documents available).

Data for the other product classes--steers/heifers, ground beef, and ground turkey, was not abundant enough to make similar comparisons. However, the post-HACCP implementation data on percent positive *Salmonella* samples for ground beef also are below both the baseline and pre-implementation *Salmonella* prevalence.

Additional data indicate that after 6 months of implementation, 88 percent of large plants have met the *Salmonella* standards. Plants failing to meet the performance standard were formally notified and required to take immediate action to come into compliance with the requirements.

An analysis of compliance by plant for poultry and swine indicate that 53 of 60 poultry plants met the standard, and 40 of the 53 had a *Salmonella* prevalence of less than 10 percent--well below the baseline of 20 percent. In swine, 8 of 10 plants met the standard, and all 8 had a prevalence below 5 percent--compared to a baseline prevalence of 8.7 percent.

A more complete report on *Salmonella* testing data in large plants will be available after the first year of sampling is completed.

Advice to Consumers

The data indicate a general trend toward lower percentages of products that are positive for *Salmonella*. However, consumers should be advised that they must continue to properly handle, prepare, and store meat, poultry, and egg products in order to avoid foodborne illness.

Documents Available:

The following documents are available on the FSIS Web site, at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov>. Copies can also be obtained by calling the Constituent Affairs Office at (202) 720-8594.

POTENTIAL PRESIDENTIAL FOOD SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT

This could be an event for Thursday, September 24; Friday, September 25; or the radio address on Saturday, September 26. The President could: (1) announce the results of a new study showing that incidence of salmonella has been reduced by almost 50 percent in chicken and almost 40 percent in pork since the President implemented HACCP; (2) announce some food safety grants; and (3) call on Congress to fully fund his food safety initiative, as this study shows we are on the right track toward improving food safety.

Here is some language on how the event might look:

The President announced that his new, prevention-oriented meat and poultry inspection system has nearly cut in half the proportion of broiler chickens contaminated with salmonella -- and greatly reduced the frequency of salmonella in pork. These data, while preliminary, indicate that the Administration's science-based inspection system, introduced in 1996, is already having a significant impact on the safety of food American families eat.

Salmonella is a potentially deadly bacteria that sickens an estimated 800,000 to 4 million Americans each year, costing the nation an estimated \$726 million to \$3.6 billion each year in lost productivity and medical costs. It is estimated to cause up to 4000 death per year.¹

Initial testing in large plants indicates that salmonella, found on 20 percent of broiler chickens before implementation of the new Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points inspection system (HACCP), was found on only 10.4 percent of chickens during testing earlier this year. And salmonella was found in only 5.5 percent of swine from plants that had implemented HACCP; 8.7 percent had tested positive previously. Today's results stem from testing conducted over a six-month period earlier this year, after implementation of HACCP in large plants.

Reflecting the Administration's comprehensive, farm-to-table approach to food safety, the President also announced several new grants in food safety research and education. The new research grants fund efforts to prevent or reduce illness caused by foodborne pathogens. And the food safety education grants specifically target higher-risk communities and under-served populations, emphasizing information for consumers and food preparers about safe food handling practices.

Today's announcements demonstrate that the Administration's food safety strategy is already producing real public health benefits for American families. Still, President Clinton stressed the need to do even more to protect public health and improve food safety. Specifically, he urged Congress to fully fund his National Food Safety Initiative.

¹ USDA, Economic Research Service, 1993 data

FOOD SAFETY STUDY AND NEWS STORY

USDA has prepared data on the effectiveness of your science-based food safety program, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), which shows an almost 50 percent reduction in the frequency of salmonella in broiler chickens and an almost 40 percent reduction in the frequency of salmonella in swine. These data, while preliminary, indicate that HACCP is already having a significant impact on the safety of food American families eat. The DPC provided this data to the Washington Post which plans to use it in a story this Sunday or Monday. We are using this study to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Administration program and to urge Congress to provide full funding for your Food Safety Initiative. It appears that the Agricultural Appropriations conference will meet formally early next week, and we hope this study influences their deliberations.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 4, 1998

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*Room
142*

MEMORANDUM FOR THOMAS FREEDMAN
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND
SENIOR DIRECTOR FOR POLICY PLANNING

FROM: VIRGINIA R. CANTER *MC*
ASSOCIATE COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Public Financial Disclosure Report (SF 278)

Your position has been identified as one for which you must file a Public Financial Disclosure Report (SF 278). The SF 278 is used to identify whether you have any conflicts of interest that should be addressed in the performance of your official responsibilities.

Ordinarily, the SF 278 must be filed in our office within 30 days of your promotion. However, due to problems with our computer databases, your promotion was only recently brought to our attention. Accordingly, your report is due to me (Room 136, OEOB) by Tuesday, September 22, 1998. Attached are the report and an instruction form that will help answer any questions you may have. If you have any other questions regarding the completion of the report, please call Diane Mercurio of our office at extension 6-2659.

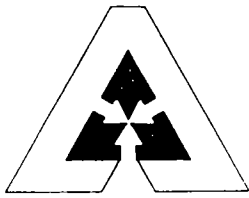
Attachments

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Sonoma
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THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE TO END HOMELESSNESS

September 2, 1998

A Homeless-Specific Substance Abuse Program

In the fight against homelessness, substance abuse treatment is a critical need. It is estimated that approximately 40 percent of homeless adults are addicted to drugs and/or alcohol. Without treatment, these individuals often prove impossible to move out of homelessness. They can cause grave difficulties for municipal officials and service providers.

The primary “mainstream” substance abuse program of the federal government has not reached homeless people adequately. The Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Performance Partnership Block Grant, administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, provides formula grants to states. There is no requirement that grantees serve homeless people, or even that they collect information about how or whether they do so.

Very few states run any homeless-specific substance abuse programs with SAMHSA money (Massachusetts is the one exception known to the Alliance). Knowledge about effective substance abuse programs for homeless people, partially developed through earlier research grants, is not actively promoted or spread. Homeless service providers report that mainstream substance abuse programs in their communities do not actively seek homeless clients, and often have preadmission requirements that prevent homeless people from receiving the services.

The Alliance recommends the creation of **a homeless-specific substance abuse program** within SAMHSA. The program would fund local agencies to bring homeless people into the substance abuse treatment system through outreach and case management, and make the mainstream system more responsive to the needs of homeless people, while promoting and supporting effective treatment models coordinated with efforts to obtain work and secure permanent housing. Such a program would improve the ability of homeless people to benefit from the mainstream substance abuse system, rather than creating a “parallel” system. Successful models exist, but are rare due to the lack of an adequate source of funding.

This program would perform the same functions for people with substance abuse addiction disorders as SAMHSA’s ACCESS and PATH programs have performed for homeless people with mental illnesses. SAMHSA has fruitful experience through these programs, that could be brought to bear on substance abuse as a barrier to ending homelessness.

DRAFT

Food
Safety
Inspection
Service**DRAFT****Background:****September 1998**

(Danielle Schor)

Progress Report on *Salmonella* Testing for Raw Meat and Poultry Products**Background**

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¹ USDA, Economic Research Service, 1993 data

JUN- 5-98 THU 14:05

P. 02



2600 IDS TOWER • 80 SOUTH 8TH STREET • MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402 2277 • PHONE 612/338-8551 • FAX 612/339-5710

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: John Lettman
President, Malt-O-Meal Co.
612-338-8551

June 5, 1998

MALT-O-MEAL VOLUNTARILY RECALLS
PLAIN TOASTED OAT CEREALS BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE HEALTH RISK

Malt-O-Meal, Inc. of Minneapolis, MN. is voluntarily recalling an estimated two to three million pounds of plain toasted oat breakfast cereals produced under 39 brand names, because they have the potential to be contaminated with *Salmonella* serotype Agona. *Salmonella* is an organism that can cause serious and sometimes fatal infections in young children, frail, or elderly people, and others with weakened immune systems. Healthy individuals may suffer only short-term symptoms, such as high fever, severe headache, vomiting, nausea, abdominal pain and diarrhea. In rare circumstances, infection with *Salmonella* can result in the organism getting into the bloodstream and producing more severe illnesses such as arterial infections, endocarditis and arthritis.

The recall covers all plain toasted oat products distributed under the following brand names:

<u>National Brand (Total U.S.)</u>	<u>Product Name</u>
Malt-O-Meal	Toasty-O's
	Toasted Oats (distributed by MOMCO)

All plain "Toasted Oats" cereals marketed under the following store brands (regionally distributed*):

<u>Brand (Store)</u>	<u>Brand (Store)</u>	<u>Brand (Store)</u>
America's Choice (A&P)	Hill Country Fare (H.E. Buu)	Sweetlife
Bi-Lo	Laura Lynn (Ingles)	Delchamps
Tops	Kroger	Eagle
Janel Lee (Albertson's)	Our Family (Nash Finch)	Finest
Millville (Aldi)	Pathmark	Food Club
Acme	Safeway	Fry's
Jewel	Shaw's	Kingston
Lucky	Stater Brothers	Meijer
Value Wise	Cub	Schmucks
IGA	Flavorite	Smith's
Signature (FSA)	Foodland	Weis
Hannaford Brothers	Natures Best	Western Family
Harris-Teceter	Shop N Save	

*More detailed information regarding geographic distribution of store brands is available on our website @ www.malt-o-meal.com.

- more -

JUN- 5-98 THU 14:06

P. 03

Plain Toasted Oat Recall**Page 2**

The plain toasted oat cereals are packaged in 10-, 15-, 32-, and 40-ounce bags as well as 15-, 20- and 35-ounce boxes. Any consumer with this product should return that product to the retailer where it was purchased.

On Thursday, June 4, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that during April and May, 1998, 188 cases of Salmonella serotype Agona have been reported by 11 states and 40 persons were hospitalized. According to the CDC, cases have been reported from Illinois (46), Indiana (29), Michigan (15), Ohio (21), Missouri (18), New York (22), Pennsylvania (20), Iowa (7), Kansas (3), West Virginia (2), and Wisconsin (5). No deaths have been reported.

At this time, little is known about the source of the problem, which was discovered when states reported an increase in cases of Salmonella serotype Agona, a relatively unusual form of salmonella. Some illnesses were linked to the Millville brand of Toasted Oat cereals, which is produced by Malt-O-Meal for Aldi supermarkets. As a precaution, Malt-O-Meal is recalling all plain toasted oat cereals produced on the same production line as the Millville product. Only plain toasted oat cereals are affected by the recall. All other Malt-O-Meal products, including flavored toasted oat products, are not involved.

Consumers who may have this product on hand are urged not to eat it and are asked to return it to the retailer where it was purchased. Consumers who are uncertain whether they have any of the product being recalled can also check the company's website at "www.malt-o-meal.com" for a complete list of brands covered by the recall.

###



Public Affairs Office
U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20207
WEB SITE: www.cpsc.gov

Date: 6/5/98 Time: 4:15 a.m./(p.m.)

To: Tam Friedman

Organization: _____

Voice: _____ Fax: 202 456 7431

Subject: _____

From: Kathleen Begala

Voice: (301) 504-0580 Ext. 1193 Fax: (301) 504-0862 or (301) 504-0399

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NOTE:

Vulnerable Populations