

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Thursday, February 21st, 2013 - 8:30 am to 4:00 pm
Friday, February 22nd, 2013 - 8:00 am to 12:00 pm
Ottawa, Ontario

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1. Welcome and Introductions

Paul Savage, Vice-Chair, welcomed the committee to the meeting. A round of introductions was done; see appendix for a list of participants.

2. Guidelines and Instructions for Controlling Meat and Poultry Products Pending FSIS Tests results (Effective February 8, 2013) – Industry concerns

On February 8th, the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) began implementing its “test and hold” policy. Some concerns from industry as the shelf life of fresh meat and the products that are tested for non-food safety consumer protection verification (e.g., protein-fat-free and moisture in hams) were discussed. The recall process if positive samples are found at the border was also a concern. This policy has forced the Canadian industry to increase testing of exported product to United States.

3. List of priority interventions update – industry concerns, additions

A new addition was made to the list, Finalyse from Elanco, a phage product to control E. coli O157. The need to have faster approval of the items in the priority list should be communicated to Health Canada and CFIA. In rapid test methods approval has been noted by companies that listeria tests take longer than other pathogen tests. The updates on the items have been made by Health Canada later on the meeting.

4. CFIA updates

Parthiban Muthukumarasamy, Director of the Meat Division and other CFIA representatives presented updates in these subjects:

a. CFIA Organizational Chart (involved with meat industry)

The CFIA in Ottawa organizational chart will be found in the CMC website in the section for members under the Technical Committee meeting presentations. Dr. Muthukumarasamy suggested to the committee members to contact him, Dr. Appelt or Dr. Labbé for any inquiry to be addressed to the right person.

b. When do you anticipate releasing a summary of comments and/or Gazette Notice Part II on the proposed changes to the Meat Inspection Regulations?

By the end of March.

c. How is affected CFIA and industry when the label registration unit will be dismantled

Once the regulation is repealed, the registration labeling unit will stop by the next day. No transition time or measures will be in place. Labeling will continue to be verified by CFIA staff through CVS tasks (frequency at a low level). CFIA will focus on the food safety part of labeling. It was also mentioned that label complaints will be treated at regional level by area labelling specialists. CFIA will still have support on labelling issues to the inspectors in charge or area specialist. Industry members are encouraged to take advice of labeling consultants or even take courses on labeling (Guelph University).

d. How is affected CFIA and industry when the registration of packaging and labelling materials will be repealed

Domestic food manufacturers as well as importers still required proving that the packaging material is safe for the intended use upon demand. CFIA will accept letters of guarantee, trade partner registration, other from other jurisdictions (USDA, Europe, etc.) or Health Canada complying with the CFIA requirements on packaging materials. The CFIA staff will be still verifying through CVS activities on-site. The list of packaging materials in the CFIA website will be removed once the regulations will be repealed.

e. Guidelines and Instructions for Controlling Meat and Poultry Products Pending FSIS Test Results (Effective February 8, 2013)

CFIA will get back to FSIS with all industry concerns created by the implementation of this policy. The Canadian Meat Council will be submitting the member's concerns to CFIA. A new Q&A document was sent to CFIA (see in the website).

f. Development about the questions posed with respect to our proposed reduced sampling plan for mechanically separated/ finely textured meat.

No updates on this file. CFIA resources have been allocated for other priorities (Listeria policy, annex O on E. coli).

g. Harmonization of the Meat Nomenclature Canada-United States.

From now to August 2014 will be allowed the use of the Meat Cuts Manual and the Meat Buyer's Guide. CFIA will release a directive to allow the use of both documents. By August 2014, the use of the amended Meat Buyer's Guide by Canadian and US industry and government will be the only document acceptable for meat nomenclature in Canada. The Meat Buyer's Guide will be still mandatory for Canada.

h. Lessons learned from the E. coli recalls (Establishments 38 and 231)

The internal review and recommendations of the expert panel on the recall of establishment 38 will be released in May 2013. Ron Osborne is the industry representative in this panel. Recall in establishment 231 showed to CFIA that no effective tracking system was in place. CFIA stated that transparency in high profile recalls will be escalating.

i. Regulatory changes in the enhanced control of E. coli O157:H7

The Annex O will be amended and implemented by April 1, 2013. This policy was revised following the draft publication of the Health Canada Guidance Document on E. coli O157:H7 and E. coli O157:NM in Raw Beef. While revising this policy, the following points were actively considered: Recent advances in science and current industry practices, lessons learnt from recent food recalls and international trade and market access.

The list of major changes is as follows:

- Updated the old definitions and/or introduced new definition of terms e.g. accredited laboratory, presumptive positive, confirmed positive, epidemiological evidence, implicated product, precursor material (PM) and Finished raw ground beef product (FRGBP)
- Recommended Pre Harvest Management Controls for E. coli O157 in slaughter establishments
- Clarified sampling procedures (5 x 65 g) for precursor materials not capable of excision testing (e.g. Finely Textured Meat)
- Updated lot definition in the light of Health Canada policy
- Clarified the scope of implicated product
- Introduced the concept and new requirement of trend analysis/process awareness
- Introduced the concept and new requirement for High Event Period protocol
- New requirement of generic E. coli testing in ground beef
- New requirement for operators follow up testing in case of E. coli O157 positives from CFIA sampling of finished raw ground beef product sampling plan M201
- Removed the requirement of testing cooked product when E. coli O157 positive product is cooked under an approved validated cooking process

Additionally, increase in sampling plan numbers for CFIA verification sampling for precursor materials (Sampling plan M218) is being actively considered. CFIA introduced the requirement to identify and address E. coli O157 as hazard in HACCP system for non-intact raw beef products including tenderized beef. Health Canada will provide more guidance on Mechanically Tenderized Beef once they have completed their risk analysis.

j. Guidance on “natural” and “method of production” claims (including “raised without antibiotics”, “grain fed”, etc.) for animal products.

Consumer draft of approval process will be finalized at the end of March 2013.

k. Developments on the findings of *Trichinella* in pork meat

No further development was made. It has to be notified to the OIE when Canada usually does it (every 6 months). No trade concerns with this situation because the case came from a no commercial pig production.

1. List of priority interventions update

Dr. Muthukumarasamy mentioned that will be part of his responsibilities to link Health Canada and CFIA with the development and progress of this list. The list of priorities with the updates on the website.

5. CFIA exports updates

Dr. Yves Labbé, National manager of International Programs at CFIA, presented an exports overview.

- a. Russia has banned meat coming from animals fed with feeds containing ractopamine. Russians increased meat import controls. He mentioned that the plants approved to export meat to the European Union will be accepted in Russia as well. Russia will be looking for a list of establishments in Canada that follow a protocol to raise and slaughter animals free of ractopamine. It is probable that China look for the same kind of protocol.
- b. Audits updates
 - USDA audit results: No results yet. Once the draft report gets to CFIA, CFIA will send it back with their comments. This process will take 3-4 months more.
 - Upcoming audits (Korea, Russia, other): Russia will come to visit Canada during this year. Korea postponed the visit to Canada with no news yet when they will be planning to come.
- c. Canadian audits abroad: In February, CFIA went to audit US inspection system. CFIA announced that more audits will be coming up for other countries.

6. Imported Food Sector: Product Regulatory Proposal

Joan Wakeman, Acting Director of Imported and Manufactured Food Division at CFIA, presented the Importation regulatory proposal. The presentation is in the website.

7. Canadian Meat Council strategic plan 2013

Jim Laws, Executive Director at the Canadian Meat Council, presented the strategic plan of the Council for 2013 (presentation is in the website).

8. Issues industry will address in 2013 and website launch

Dr. Jorge Correa, Technical Director at the Canadian Meat Council, presented the issues which the meat industry will deal in 2013 (presentation in the website). Dr. Correa also mentioned the new Canadian Meat Council's website is alive and he said the technical committee members can now see the schedule of events, meeting agendas, minutes and presentations under the only member zone.

9. Inspection modernization update

Pamela MacDonald, Acting Director of Inspection Modernization at CFIA, said that the draft model will be public for consultation in March 2013, reviewing comments by the end of the summer and full implementation by the fall 2013. Consultation with industry will be made by means of webinars and in-person sessions. Her presentation is the website.

10. Review of October 2012 meeting minutes

The minutes of the October 2012 meeting were reviewed. No relevant points were risen during the review. Dr. Correa mentioned that no data is available at the retail level about the temperature variation according to the studies made by Dr. Haley Oliver. Dr. Correa showed some of the results of hers studies (slides attached in presentation 8. Industry issues by CMC 2013 in the website).

11. Government relations update

Ron Davidson, Director Government and Media Relations at the Canadian Meat Council, presented the communications initiatives and governmental discussions on the main issues that are of interest for meat industry and the Council is addressing presently (presentation in the website).

12. Irradiation

Ron Davidson presented the initiatives taken to relaunch the irradiation file (slides on presentation 11. Government and Media relations).

13. Food Safety Enhancement Program/ Compliance Verification Program (FSEP/CVS) updates in webinar in March (uniformity project, writing CARs, among others) with Tom Graham, National Inspection Manager, National Operations, CFIA

Tom Graham has regretted for missing the Technical Committee meeting since he has some new progress in many issues that he would have liked to address to the industry. In order to address his message to the Canadian Meat Council members, the Council will be organizing a webinar in the following months to communicate the CFIA message in FSEP/ CVS.

14. Sodium reduction

Mary Ann Binnie, consultant with the Canadian Meat Council, presented the updates on sodium reduction (Presentation is in the website).

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16. New Food Legislative Authorities and Food Regulatory Modernization, Case Study: Food Additives

Barbara Lee, Director of the Bureau of Chemical Safety at the Food Directorate of Health Canada, has presented the new legislative tool that allows Health Canada to accelerate the approval of food additives (presentation is in the website).

17. Clarification on what Health Canada defines as “Good Manufacturing Practices” for the levels on the list of permitted food additives

Barbara Lee responded with this paragraph “B.01.044. Where the limit prescribed for a food additive in a table to section B.16.100 is stated to be “Good Manufacturing Practice”, the amount of the food additive added to a food in manufacturing and processing shall not exceed the amount required to accomplish the purpose for which that additive is permitted to be added to that food”.

- **How Health Canada will be affected when the Meat inspection regulations proposed in the budget 2012 will be repealed (e.g.: MIR 92, 35.)**

Barbara Lee mentioned that letters of opinion will continue to be issued on packaging materials (voluntary). Health Canada is looking to all no-mandatory activities being provided to the industry stakeholders today to see how these could be better managed in the future. Indeed, Health Canada is also contemplating on removing them from their responsibilities. In order to do that, Health Canada is planning to have a workshop with the stakeholders to see how the industry could manage the option if Health Canada does not longer perform the no-mandatory activities.

Ms. Lee also mentioned that irradiation is on the table of Health Canada, they are just waiting for a formal submission. Some progress is made for the approval of processing aids at Health Canada. They have prepared a document to improve the approval process considering interim marketing authorization for products already approved in other jurisdictions (US, EU, Australia or New Zealand).

18. Health Canada updates

Helene Couture, Chief of the Evaluation Division at Health Canada, presented an update in the following topics:

a. Considerations in challenge studies

The document “*Listeria monocytogenes* Challenge Testing of Refrigerated Ready-to-Eat Foods” has been released in November 2012. International records show up to 10°C the temperature variation at the retail level. Health Canada adopted a 7°C in consideration for the challenge studies (document in the website).

b. Guidance document for industry on the Novelty Determination HPP

Minor comments were addressed by the industry in this document. The document will be published soon.

c. Guidance Document on *E. coli* O157:H7 and *E. coli* O157:NM in Raw Beef

Health Canada is planning to have a final draft by April 1st, 2013. Main additions to the document will deal with precursor materials, use of trend analysis, determination of implicated product and ready-to-eat ground beef.

d. Mechanically tenderized beef

Health Canada will be finalizing the risk assessment on mechanically tenderized beef by March 31, 2013. Presently, it is recommended 71°C of cooking temperature for mechanically tenderized beef. Health Canada is requesting data to support this cooking temperature.

19. E. coli update

Dr. Merv Baker from the Canadian Meat Council mentioned that the E. coli working group is reviewing the CFIA proposed Annex O and Health Canada guidance document.

20. Listeria update

- **Industry Best Practices Manual**

The document has been sent for translation. This document would be available in our website in the section for members only. We will proceed to request the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) for the document which is a unique numeric commercial book developed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

- **Industry testing data**

The Canadian Meat Council is planning to have a webinar with the participant establishments to present the results in the new proposed format.

21. Recalls workshops in November 2012 (results, expectations, comments)

The overall level of satisfaction of the participants was very good (see final slide in presentation 8. Industry issues by CMC 2013). The Technical committee considers that would be good to have these workshops every 2 to 3 years.

22. Pathogen Reduction in Meat and Poultry

Anne-Marie St-Laurent, Director of the Food Safety Division at CFIA, presented the progress of the pathogen reductions initiative. She mentioned that E. coli will be the next pathogen to have a microbiological baseline study because the Campylobacter and Salmonella one in broiler chicken is getting close to the end (presentation in the web).

23. Regional Activities with CFIA

- **Ontario meeting April 26, 2013 (Mississauga).**

No comments about this meeting were mentioned.

- **Quebec meeting April 19, 2013 (Montreal)**

The Canadian Meat Council will survey the Quebec members if since the last meeting in October an improvement has been noticed with the export services provided by CFIA.

- **West meetings January 2014 (Calgary and Vancouver)**

The first meetings took place the past January in Calgary and Vancouver. The CFIA was glad to have this kind of interaction with industry but it was disappointing the attendance of industry members in Vancouver. The Canadian Meat Council will survey its members to see if there is still an interest to attend to the meeting in Vancouver, otherwise, only one meeting will be organized in Calgary for the western area.

24. New Business

- **Export services from CFIA regional offices**

Some concerns about the export services provided by CFIA in Quebec were highlighted. In the other provinces, the export services seem to be acceptable for the members.

- **Decision-making: Regional Centers and supervisors versus Ottawa.**

It is being emphasized that the regional centers cannot make decision in certain issues and the communication of the issues toward the head office in Ottawa seems to be not efficient. It has been recommended to members to work with the Canadian Meat Council to address the issues directly to Ottawa.

- **Topics of interest and possible speakers for breakout sessions in Annual Conference 2013**

Subjects on control of Listeria and E. coli have been suggested by the committee.

- **Considering February meeting for only one day instead of two**

The members of the Technical Committee suggested to keep this February meeting like it is today (1 day and a half). This meeting in Ottawa is a good opportunity to have updates from the government representatives.

25. Next Meeting – Wednesday May 29, 2013, Banff, Alberta

APPENDIX - ATTENDANCE

| | Name | Company |
|----|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | Amma Brace-Crossy | Beechgrove Country Foods |
| 2 | Anne-Marie Masella | Olymel |
| 3 | Anne-Marie St-Laurent | CFIA |
| 4 | Arlene Larson | Biomerieux |
| 5 | Barbara Lee | Health Canada |
| 6 | Christian A. Blyth | 3M Food Safety |
| 7 | Cynthia Ricardson | CFIA |
| 8 | Daniel Leclerc | CFIA |
| 9 | Didier Leroux | Viau Foods |
| 10 | Doris Valade | Malabar Super Spice Co. Ltd |
| 11 | Gerry Howse | Newlyweds foods |
| 12 | Greg Forster | Silliker |
| 13 | Helene Couture | Health Canada |
| 14 | Jim Laws | Canadian Meat Council |
| 15 | Jodi Robertson | JBS |
| 16 | Jorge Andrés Correa | Canadian Meat Council |
| 17 | Joyce Longfield | Gridpath |
| 18 | Lisa Haynes-John | DuPont |
| 19 | Liviu Cojocar | St. Helen's Meat Packers Ltd. |
| 20 | Leslie Gold | St. Helen's Meat Packers Ltd. |
| 21 | Mark MacDonald | Cargill |
| 22 | Martin Appelt | CFIA |
| 23 | Mary Ann Binnie | Canadian Meat Council |
| 24 | Merv Baker | Canadian Meat Council |
| 25 | Pamela Macdonald | CFIA |
| 26 | Parthiban Muthukumarasamy | CFIA |
| 27 | Paul Savage | Olymel |
| 28 | Ashok K. Mengi | CFIA |
| 29 | Peter Stein | Pillers |
| 30 | Petr Boucek | Newlyweds Foods Co. |
| 31 | Randal Bagg | Elanco |
| 32 | Robert Paré | Alchemi |
| 33 | Ron Davidson | Canadian Meat Council |
| 34 | Salisha Hosein | Maple Leaf |
| 35 | Stephan Beaudoin | Elanco |
| 36 | Suzanne Saborin | Canadian Meat Council |
| 37 | Sylvain Gauron | Lesters |
| 38 | Thomas Vohl | Canada Compound |
| 39 | Waylon Sharp | Maxxam |
| 40 | Winnie Mui | Freybe |
| 41 | Yves Labbé | CFIA |