



OCA Update – September 14, 2007

In Brief:

Rule #2 Developments in Brief

- Rule 2 is scheduled for publication in the Sept. 18, 2007 *Federal Register* and becomes effective Nov. 19, 2007.
- It will expand the list of allowable imports from Canada.
- This rule makes final a proposed rule published in the Jan. 9, 2007 *Federal Register*.
- The final rule allows for the importation from Canada of:
 - Live cattle and other bovines (i.e., bison) for any use (including breeding) born on or after, March 1, 1999, which APHIS has determined to be the date of effective enforcement of Canada's ruminant-to-ruminant feed ban;
 - Blood and blood products derived from bovines, collected under certain conditions; and
 - Casings and part of the small intestine derived from bovines.
- It also allows for the importation of Canadian bovine meat and meat products of any age.
- APHIS followed OIE guidelines and standards and acknowledged the scientific rigor of the assessment.

Minister Ritz Comments on USDA Final BSE Minimal Risk Rule

OTTAWA, Ontario, September 14, 2007 – The Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, today issued this statement following the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) release of its final minimal risk rule on Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE).

"I'm pleased that the USDA has confirmed its intention to publish its final BSE minimal risk rule in the U.S. Federal Register. Canadian cattle producers, their families and our exporters have been eagerly awaiting the introduction of this new rule.

"I join with Canadian industry in welcoming this good news and look forward to the rule's implementation, which will help bring much needed stability to North America's beef and cattle trade.

"The USDA confirms that its final rule will be published on September 18, which would allow exports of older Canadian cattle into the United States, effective November 19, 2007. With the publication of this rule, exports of meat and meat products from older Canadian animals will also be allowed.

"I am also encouraged to see that recent decisions by Canada's New Government to further strengthen animal health safeguards, like our enhanced feed ban, are having a positive influence with other countries - allowing us to expand international trade opportunities for producers. Earlier this year, the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) officially categorized Canada as a "Controlled BSE risk"

country, which clearly recognizes the effectiveness of Canada's surveillance, mitigation and eradication measures.

"I look forward to reviewing the USDA's final rule, including what it will mean for Canadian industry, over the coming days and I will provide more detailed comments about the rule and its content at that time."

USDA Harmonizes Cattle Trade with Canada in Line with International Animal Health Standards

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14, 2007—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) today announced that it will expand the list of allowable imports from countries recognized as presenting a minimal risk of introducing bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) into the United States. Currently, Canada is the only minimal-risk country designated by the United States.

"This rule is firmly based in science and ensures that we continue to protect the U.S. against BSE," said Bruce Knight, under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs. "It also is consistent with our commitment to promote fair trade practices and further normalizes trade with countries that institute the appropriate safeguards to prevent the spread of BSE."

This rule makes final a proposed rule published in the Jan. 9, 2007 *Federal Register*. It also builds upon and expands the rule published by APHIS in January 2005 that allowed the importation of certain live ruminants and ruminant products, including cattle under 30 months of age for slaughter from countries recognized as minimal risk. The final rule announced today allows for the importation from Canada of:

Live cattle and other bovines (i.e., bison) for any use (including breeding) born on or after, March 1, 1999, which APHIS has determined to be the date of effective enforcement of Canada's ruminant-to-ruminant feed ban; Blood and blood products derived from bovines, collected under certain conditions; and Casings and part of the small intestine derived from bovines.

The January 2005 final rule, the first MRR rule, allowed the importation of Canadian bovine meat and meat products of any age. Subsequent to the publication of the final rule in January 2005, USDA delayed the applicability of those provisions of that final rule that dealt with meat and meat products from animals 30 months of age or older. With this final rule published today, that temporary delay in applicability is lifted and importation of these meat and meat products now can occur.

As part of its BSE rulemaking process, APHIS conducted a thorough risk assessment following guidelines put forth by the World Organization for Animal Health, or OIE, that evaluated the entire risk pathway, including mitigations in place both in Canada and the United States. The assessment also included evaluating the likelihood of BSE introduction via imports, the likelihood of animal exposure in the U.S. if this were to occur and the subsequent consequences. The assessment found that the risk of BSE establishment in the United States as a result of the imports announced today and those announced in January 2005 is negligible. APHIS considered new information related to the risk assessment, including Canada's identification of animals born after the date of the feed ban to evaluate the potential impact and determined that the original assessment was sufficiently robust that new data did not change the conclusions of the assessment. The risk assessment underwent a thorough, independent peer review in which all of the reviewers concurred with APHIS' risk assessment. The reviewers agreed that APHIS followed OIE guidelines and standards and acknowledged the scientific rigor of the assessment.

Additionally, APHIS encouraged the public to participate in the decision-making process by providing feedback through the submission of public comments. The public comment period on the proposed rule opened Jan. 9, 2007 and closed on March 12, 2007.

There are a series of interlocking safeguards in place to protect animal health from BSE transmission. These longstanding safeguards include the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's ruminant-to-ruminant feed ban, import controls, aggressive disease surveillance and U.S. slaughter practices. Moreover, human health in the United States also is protected by another system of interlocking safeguards that ensure the safety of U.S. beef. The most important of these safeguards is the ban on specified risk materials from the food supply. Canada has similar safeguards in place.

The final rule is scheduled for publication in the Sept. 18, 2007 *Federal Register* and becomes effective Nov. 19, 2007. Additional information is available at www.aphis.usda.gov.

More Power to Beef Farmers

September 12, 2007 (Guelph) - "The old saying, 'knowledge is power,' is certainly true for beef farmers," explains Ron Bonnett, the board chair at Beef Improvement Ontario (BIO). "BIO is about giving beef farmers knowledge about superior genetics and management tools to make good decisions. That's powerful. And democracy for an organization is powerful, too!"

Ron points to the clear message that beef farmers were sending last spring regarding BIO. "We heard loud and clear that the BIO members want more say in the direction of the organization and more control over who sits on the board." The board has been working on plans to restructure the organization and is ready to present those plans at a special members meeting in Guelph on September 26.

Changes to Board Structure

The board's proposal calls for OBIC to be dissolved. "The corporate structure was confusing to members and other stakeholders," notes Terry Malcolm, BIO's vice president. "We want a structure that is clear for everybody." The new setup will give BIO members direct say about who sits on the board of BIO and that board will have authority over all sub-organizations, currently including Agri-Food Knowledge Solutions and Agri-Food Laboratories.

The board would be made up of nine people, six being bona fide beef producers and BIO members in good standing. Three directors will be chosen from industry, representing sectors such as western Canada, Quebec, the feed industry, beef processing, genetics companies or breed associations.

There are a few other changes being proposed in the by-laws. All of these can be seen on BIO's website at www.biobeef.com. The draft changes to by-laws will be posted on their site in another week.

Changes to Operations

At the direction of the board, more changes have been made to the day-to-day business, shaving more than \$200,000 from annual operating costs. "We absolutely had to stop the bleeding," says Stewart Cressman, BIO's Secretary-Treasurer. "This organization is still suffering from the termination of OMAFRA support. But the beef industry needs the information and services that BIO can offer." Another step toward financial health has been an increase in the service costs, a move that most members have supported in phone queries.

Looking Ahead

Confident of the benefits BIO can offer the entire beef industry, the board has engaged Peggy LeSueur to research the market opportunities facing BIO in Ontario and all across the country. Peggy's long background in agricultural marketing and her recent service as General Manager at Alberta Beef position her to bring important perspective and expertise. "At this point, the Ontario market is much too small for BIO's operations to be supported. We have to increase our marketing efforts and reach further so all beef farmers can benefit from BIO's services," says Bonnett.

All of this will be further discussed and members will be asked to ratify by-law changes at the special meeting at 2 pm on September 26 held at Banquet Hall, 122-355 Elmira Rd. North in Guelph where members will be asked to ratify proposed by-law changes.

For Further Information:

Ron Bonnett, BIO President

(705) 785-3402 or (705) 987-3402

RMP

*The recently-announced Risk Management Program for grains and oilseeds
also includes farm fed grains.*

Applicants must be enrolled in CAIS.

The deadline for CAIS enrolment for 2007 is November 30.

Applications for the Risk Management Program will be available through Agricorp.

Applications Now Available For Ontario Biogas Financial Assistance Program

The \$9 million Ontario Biogas Systems Financial Assistance Program was launched in July 2007 to encourage the implementation of agricultural and food-based biogas systems and to foster agricultural innovation in Ontario.

Applicants to the program may receive up to \$400,000 in cost-shared funding to carry out feasibility studies for the installation of biogas systems, as well as cover a proportion of construction and implementation costs.

Program guidelines and application forms for the program are now available at www.ontario.ca/biogas, or by contacting:

Ontario Biogas Systems Financial Assistance Program
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
1 Stone Road West
Guelph, Ontario
N1G 4Y2

Tel: 1-888-588-4111

E-mail: biogas.program@ontario.ca

Information and application forms are also available from any regional office of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Canada Takes Part in Global Effort to Conserve Animal Genetics

OTTAWA, Ontario, September 14, 2007 – Canada's New Government has adopted the Global Plan of Action for Farm Animal Genetic Resources, an international framework to conserve and use valuable animal genetic resources.

"This global plan will help Canadian breeders and researchers access genetic resources from other countries as well as further support the export of Canadian animal genetics," said the Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board. "Canada's New Government is pleased to work with other countries to stop further erosion of farm animal genetic resources and improve their conservation and use."

Canadian breeders, on average, export \$88 million worth of animal genetics each year, including horses, bovines and swine, hatching eggs, and bovine semen and embryos.

Canada joined 168 other countries in agreeing to the plan through the Interlaken Declaration, a non-legally binding policy statement, at the world's first International Conference on Animal Genetic Resources, in Interlaken, Switzerland, September 3-7, 2007.

Genetically diverse livestock populations are essential to providing consumers with safe, quality products, and increasingly important in meeting future challenges in animal production such as environmental change, disease threats, human nutritional requirements, fluctuating markets or changing societal needs.

The adoption of the Global Plan of Action is a milestone following several years of discussions among the 168 member countries of the international Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, created in 1983 at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). For more information please visit the Commission's website at www.fao.org/ag/cgrfa.

Livestock Antibiotics Pose Minimal Environmental Risk, Study Finds

Antibiotics used on livestock pose minimal environmental risk in Canada, according to a new University of Guelph study.

Prof. Paul Sibley, Department of Environmental Biology, and Prof. Keith Solomon, Centre for Toxicology, recently completed a six-year study examining the use of pharmaceuticals in the Canadian hog and cattle industry. They found that pharmaceuticals don't pose appreciable risks to soil and water if used as instructed.

"We've found evidence that suggests there's little risk to soil and aquatic biota from using pharmaceutical products," said Sibley.

Pharmaceuticals first raised concerns when they were detected in the environment more than a decade ago. It was thought they could cause contamination through simple routine practices such as

manure spreading. Animals administered antibiotics excreted them through feces or urine, which was then applied to land and could cause damage to soil systems or migrate into nearby waterways.

To determine whether these concerns were valid, Sibley, Solomon and a team of researchers simulated real-life scenarios in the laboratory and field to study the toxicity of pharmaceuticals. They applied pharmaceuticals directly to soil and water to simulate field exposure. This direct exposure would be similar to an actual worst-case scenario, making it a good test of potential risks, said Sibley.

After applying the pharmaceuticals, the researchers tested the soil, soil life, water and aquatic life in the area to measure the level of toxicity. They also measured concentrations of antibiotics at several locations on the Grand River watershed heavily populated with livestock.

In both studies, they found the level of antibiotics detected was "significantly" lower than the amount required to elicit toxic responses and was therefore likely to pose negligible environmental risk, said Sibley.

The long duration of some of the studies, which ran up to 60 days, helped the researchers accurately assess changes in contamination levels and toxicity over time, ultimately leading to a stronger conclusion that supports environmental safety, he said.

"I hope this research still encourages pharmaceutical companies, veterinarians and producers to be more efficient with their antibiotic treatments but, at the same time, eases any thoughts of potential negative environmental effects."

Foot and Mouth Disease confirmed in Surrey

Date: 12 September 2007

Initial laboratory tests on the samples taken this morning from the cattle on the holding in Surrey where disease was suspected have indicated the presence of Foot and Mouth Disease.

On the basis of these initial laboratory results and clinical symptoms Debby Reynolds, UK Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), has confirmed Foot and Mouth Disease. The farm comprises a number of separate parcels of land and a single Protection Zone will be put in place which extends a 3 kilometres radius from each of them, and a Surveillance Zone of 10 kilometres radius beyond that. Footpaths will be closed in the Protection Zone.

The farm itself has been under restrictions since last night. This morning the decision to cull the cattle was taken on the suspicion of disease based on clinical signs, and an initial 10km Temporary Control Zone was put in place around the premises.

A movement ban of cattle, sheep, pigs and other ruminants has now been imposed in England and parallel arrangements are being made by the Scottish and Welsh administrations. No movements of susceptible animals are allowed except under licence. The licence conditions may vary between England, Scotland and Wales.

In England, controls are in place on movement of animal carcasses, animal gatherings, shearing and dipping are restricted, and all farms must increase levels of biosecurity. In both the Protection and Surveillance Zones, there will be requirements for increased levels of biosecurity on farms, movement controls, controls on transportation of dung/manure and treatment of animal products to ensure destruction of the FMD virus. Confirmation of the movements which will be permitted under licenses will be issued later today.

Secretary of State for the Environment, Hilary Benn, said:

"This is news that no one wanted to hear, least of all the farming industry. The immediate establishment of both a Protection Zone, with footpaths closed within it, and a national animal movement ban shows our determination to contain and eradicate this latest outbreak. Having spoken this morning to farming industry representatives, I know they share this view and the utmost vigilance is now needed from everyone."

CVO Debby Reynolds said:

"At this stage we have not identified the strain or origin of this outbreak. The situation remains uncertain, and I urge all animal keepers to be vigilant for signs of disease, practice stringent biosecurity measures, including the movement ban and licensing conditions."

All animals currently in transit should continue to their destination where they should remain in place.

The European Commission has been informed.

Foot and Mouth Disease in the UK: Recommended On-Farm Biosecurity Measures During this Period of Increased Surveillance

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has an emergency response plan in place to deal swiftly with a foreign animal disease outbreak, such as FMD. It has stopped issuing import permits for any commodities from the UK that could transmit the FMD virus and is reviewing its records to determine whether Canada has imported any susceptible live animals or animal products from the affected region during the last three months. At this point there appears to be no risk of the disease being imported into Canada. For more information, please see the attached CFIA news release. In addition, the CCA is developing an emergency preparedness plan for the industry in conjunction with a multi-sector emergency preparedness plan developed by the Canadian Animal Health Coalition.

The CFIA's preventative measures include:

- Immediate suspension of animal, genetic and product imports
- Increased surveillance at ports of entry
- Information for travelers and tourists

Producers are encouraged to follow some important steps during this time to help prevent the spread of this disease in Canada. In general, they are encouraged to be very vigilant and be aware of who (workers, visitors, etc.) is on their farm/ranch, who has been there and where they've been. If you plan to travel to the UK or any country that has FMD, please exercise caution and if you are visiting a farm, ensure you have a clean clothes brought to you at the airport when you return and disinfect clothing that was worn overseas.

- Signage - No unknown Visitors
- Records of visitors and suppliers
- Provide boots and coveralls
- Disinfect footwear leaving & returning to farm, ranch or feedlot
- Clean and disinfect buildings after use by livestock
- Wear clean overalls and footwear
- Wash hands before and after handling cattle
- Insist all workers/visitors use foot dip which is changed regularly
- Regularly clean and disinfect:
 - all equipment used in contact with your cattle
 - any hired/shared equipment
 - buildings used to isolate animals
- Clean and disinfect all equipment and buildings after any disease outbreak
- Clean and disinfect vehicles after transporting any animals
- Park vehicles to avoid contact with livestock

CFIA Announces Updated Compensation for Destroyed Animals

After extensive consultation with stakeholders, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has revised the maximum compensation that will be paid to the owner of an animal ordered destroyed for disease control purposes. The Regulation amending the compensation for destroyed animals has taken effect after being registered in Canada Gazette Part II (<http://canadagazette.gc.ca/partII/2007/20070808/pdf/g2-14116.pdf>). Some revised maxima are noted as follows:

- a registered swine, \$5000, and a non-registered swine \$2500;
- a registered bovine, \$8000, and a non registered bovine \$2500;
- a turkey parent breeder, \$90, and grand parent breeder \$270.

Deadline Nears for Agricultural Excellence Award Nominations

OTTAWA, Ontario, August 10, 2007 – Time is running out for nominations for the seventh annual Canadian Agri-Food Awards of Excellence. The national awards, held in partnership with the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair (RAWF), celebrate outstanding achievement in innovation, environmental stewardship, export performance, voluntarism, and agricultural awareness and education.

A new award has been added this year to celebrate youth leadership.

Nominations for the Canadian Agri-Food Awards of Excellence will be accepted until Friday, September 7, 2007. The awards will be presented on November 5 at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto.

Selection criteria (see attached backgrounder) and nomination forms are available at www.agr.gc.ca/awards or by contacting Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada by phone at 1-800-410-7104 or email info@agr.gc.ca. The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair can be reached at 416-263-3411.

Are You a Farmer Looking for Financial Assistance for Training?

The agriculture sector is becoming increasingly knowledge intensive. Successful farmers recognize the need for continuous learning to adapt and prosper in an ever changing marketplace. To help producers respond, the Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS) program is available to help qualifying producers and their spouses develop skills and knowledge to increase their farm profitability and net family income.

Sarah Dotzert, a young Ontario farmer, is a Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS) participant and has this to say about the program, "We had no hope left that a 5th generation could go on with the small family farm. Through working with expert professionals, the CASS funding allowed us to put together a detailed plan. Not only I, as a young farmer, but my entire family is greatly impacted by the knowledge and skills learned. Thank you! The impact was immediate and its reaches remain to be seen!"

Through CASS, eligible participants may receive financial assistance for approved training costs such as tuition and travel. Financial benefits range from \$8,000 - \$16,000 for qualified participants. For example, a farmer and spouse who have an average net family income over the past 3 years of up to \$35,000 can each be eligible for up to \$16,000 in training costs.

CASS also contains special provisions to assist beginning farmers and their spouses develop the skills and knowledge to establish or become part of a farm business. Beginning farmers, for example, are only required to show one year's average net family income for eligibility.

CASS is funded through the federal-provincial-territorial Agricultural Policy Framework. The Colleges of Ontario Network for Education and Training (CON*NECT) delivers CASS in Ontario, in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

You can get more information about CASS by visiting the website at www.ontario.ca/cass or by calling 1-877-830-0200.

OCA Seeks Applications for Pasture and TESA Awards

The Ontario Cattlemen's Association is seeking applicants for both the Ontario Pasture Award and the Ontario Environmental Stewardship Award.

The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA)

This marks the twelfth year of the award, which recognizes the outstanding environmental stewardship of an Ontario cattleman. Special consideration will be given to producers who have taken innovative approaches to environmentally sustainable cattle production.

Any Ontario cattle producer or cattle farming operation can be nominated for this award by him or herself, another producer, interested individual(s) or the local cattlemen's association. TESA nominations should include:

- An outline of the goals set (long and short term) for the farm
- An explanation of the implementation of the goals

- A description of the accomplishments including benefits to the environment and to the cattle producing operation
- An indication of experience and willingness to speak on behalf of cattle producers to the public on environmental issues
- Demonstration of links with community or other groups
- An overview of the cost effectiveness/innovation of environmental solutions and management changes.

Photographs are encouraged as part of the nomination. One independent letter of recommendation should be included.

The nomination deadline is November 30, 2007. Applications can be found on the OCA Web site at http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/programs/TESA_application.asp

Submit nominations to TESA, c/o The Ontario Cattlemen's Association, 130 Malcolm Road, Guelph, ON, N1K 1B1

Ontario Pasture Award

The Ontario Cattlemen's Association is pleased to partner with Mapleseed and the Ontario Forage Council in sponsoring the "Mapleseed Pasture Award 2006." This is an excellent opportunity to recognize individual producers who are doing an outstanding job of pasture management. The Mapleseed Pasture Award is also a way of encouraging producers to implement pasture management strategies that maximize production per acre.

Mapleseed contributes a cash award of \$750 to the winner, \$250 to cover their accommodation plus a 25kg bag of their choice of a Mapleseed Forage Mix. There will also be 2 honorary prizewinners, each winning \$250 and a 25kg bag of Forage Mix. The winners will be announced at the OCA Annual General Meeting which will take place in February 2008.

To submit a nomination for this award, complete the application form below. Feel free to include pictures and or diagrams (for more, go to <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/programs/OntPastureApp.asp>).

Application Deadline: November 17, 2007.

Send completed applications c/o Ontario Forage Council, Box 463, Markdale, ON, N0C 1H0

Consider nominating someone from your area for the Mapleseed Pasture Award. Nominations can be made by individuals, groups or organizations.

Fall Stocker Sales and Northern Network Fall Stocker listing are Now Posted to the OCA Web site

2007 Ontario Fall Stocker Sales Schedule

<http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/markets/fallsales07A-G.asp>

Northern Cattle Sales Network

http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/markets/auction_markets/northern.asp

Durham Cattlemen's Association Scholarship

Who is eligible? - Students from Durham Region or Hope Twp. entering their first year of study in one of the following:

- Undergraduate studies in Agriculture at the University of Guelph in one of either B.Comm or B.Sc.
- Diploma studies at either one of the Ridgeway or Kemptville Campus' of the University of Guelph

*Consideration will also be given to students entering studies at Ag College's located outside the province of Ontario. Those students from a farm background having grown up in Durham Region or Hope Twp. and entering post-secondary education programs outside of agriculture will be also be considered. Of note however, those students entering studies in agriculture will be considered first.

** Preference will be given to students having demonstrated an interest in beef cattle production.

Amount of Scholarship - \$1000. One time scholarship i.e. those students who have received the scholarship entering OAC would not be eligible a 2nd time if accepted into OVC.

How to apply? - Students will submit an essay to the Durham Cattlemen's Association (DCA) on a topic determined by DCA. The essay is not to be more than 500 words in length. A selection committee appointed by the DCA will review the essays. Candidates deemed successful by the selection committee will be invited to attend an interview. Based on the quality of the essay and the results of the interview a successful candidate will be chosen.

For more information - Contact a director of the Durham Cattlemen's Association or
Lawrence McLaughlin 15201 McLaughlin Rd. Nestleton, (905) 986 4456 or
lawrelin@sympatico.ca

BIC Bits

BIC Partners to Promote Local Beef Brand

The Beef Information Centre (BIC) partnered with the Ontario Cattle Feeders Association (OCFA) to help launch a new beef brand in August with the Loblaws group of stores - Ontario Corn Fed Beef™. BIC worked with OCFA to develop the marketing elements of this program such as on-pack labels, point-of-sale materials (shelf strips, counter dividers, etc.), flyers, and in-store signage.

"Branding programs often have recognizable quality-based attributes that define the product and ensure consistency and customer loyalty," says Derrick Ash, director, retail marketing for BIC. "BIC studies show that 40 per cent of consumers feel more confident if beef is branded."

As a result of the quality and consistency achieved through branded programs, consumers are willing to pay a premium on these attributes, thus helping producers realize a premium on the value of their cattle. With this program, Ontario producers differentiate themselves in a highly competitive retail landscape.

Research shows that fresh meat, as one of the top 10 grocery categories, grew by eight per cent last year. "The development and expansion of branded beef merchandising is one of the most significant areas of growth in the industry," adds Ash. "The Ontario corn fed program provides retailers with an excellent opportunity to identify and leverage a partnership that communicates important consumer benefits (quality, consistency and value) that are established through a collaborative industry effort."

Corn fed beef is a premium beef product that is finished on corn using strict farming practices and livestock management to produce a high quality product. Corn fed beef offers a consistently tender and tasty eating experience with a distinct beef flavor. It is also locally raised as 'Ontario's Brand of Beef'. Ontario Corn Fed Beef products developed under the new brand include: Marinating Steak/Medallion, Simmering Steak/Strips, Grilling Steak/Medallion, Premium Oven Roast, Oven Roast, Pot Roast, and Stewing beef. For more information on this program visit www.OntarioCornFedBeef.com.

BIC supports the development of branded beef programs at the retail level to enhance consumer perception of beef, to increase the profitability and meet the needs of retail clients through technical resources and the sharing of information. All branded beef programs feature only Canadian quality grades which will enhance the retailer's commitment to Canadian supply. For more information on BIC and beef visit www.beefinfo.org.

"Source for Success" Polled Hereford Sale

Saturday September 15, 2007 at 1pm

Location: Billy Elmhirst's Farm
1870 Settlers Line
Indian River, ON

15km east of Peterborough on #7 Hwy

65 Lots - Canada's Top Genetics
Outstanding herd sire prospects, fancy 4-H and Junior prospects, replacement females & proven females.
View catalogue online www.elmlodge.ca
Contact Elm Lodge Polled Herefords

Uppin the Ante Charolais Female Sale

Sale Location: Purple Hill Auction Barn, Thorndale Ontario (near London)
Date and Time: Saturday September 29, 2007
40 select Purebred Charolais Females
Heifer Calf Show prospects, Bred Yearlings, Cow/Calf Pairs and Bred Cows
Jr Incentive program: cash incentives for a project animal purchased from Uppin the Ante –check out
Web site for details

All-day viewing of cattle Friday September 28, 2007.
Sale day viewing in morning followed by luncheon at 11am, sale at 2pm.
Sale day phone 519 871 4703 or 403 350 9858 or 519 636 5506
Catalogue available on line at www.buyagro.com

The Futures One Simmental Sale: Edition I

September 15, 2007
3:30 pm
Destiny Simmentals, R.R. #2 Meaford,
196576 7th Line Euphrasia (North of Rocklyn)
70 Lots – Red and black purebreds, fullbloods and full fleckvieh Simmentals
Outstanding herdsire prospects, fancy heifer calves, bred yearlings & mature cows.

Consignors:

Destiny Simmentals, Meaford, ON - Todd and Karen Campbell (519) 538-5103 Email:
tcampbell@rbafinancial.com; Jetstream Livestock, Orton, ON - Shane Williams & Joanne Handley (519)
787-1323 Email: jetslivestock@aol.com; Cedar Creek Simmentals, Peterborough, ON - Steve & Lara
Murray, Pat Murray & Janal Ingram (705) 292-5323; Chandor Farms, Cochrane, ON - Rheal & Suzanne
Cousineau, Marc & Tina Cousineau Farm: (705) 272-6649 ; White Lake Farm, White Lake, ON - Jacques
& Lynda Lalonde (613) 623-1001;

View Sale Catalogue On Line: www.bouchardlivestock.com

Contact: Shane Williams & Joanne Handley
(519) 787-1323or (519) 938-1220

International Plowing Match and Farm Equipment Show/Country Festival Sowing Seeds, Growing Dreams!

Sept 18-22
<http://www.ipm2007.ca/>

Donmoore Charolais Farms Mature Cowherd Dispersal

Saturday, September 15, 2007
4:00 p.m.
Carson's Sales Arena, Listowel, ON
Sale Day: 519.291.2049
Catalogue can be viewed online at www.charolaisbanner.com

58 Charolais cow/calf pairs and two mature herdsires
For more information contact Adam Winder or Don Scott at 519.864.5866

Waterloo Cattlemen's Association 43rd Annual Beef Barbecue

September 28

6:30pm

ALL THE BEEF YOU CAN EAT!!

New Dundee Community Centre

Dance to DJ Derek Habermehl

DOOR PRIZES

\$18 - Advance Sale Only

Tickets Available through the 2007 WCA Board of Directors

Stewart Cressman, President (519) 696-3119

Dufferin Town and Country Farm Tour

September 29

9am-4pm

Sponsored by Dufferin Cattlemen's Association and other commodity groups.

This is a self-guided driving tour to farms and agri-businesses in East Garafraxa Township. Pick up passport morning of tour at Hill of Headwaters Tourism, Orangeville or Inland Co-operative, Grand Valley.

Lunch is available on the route. See farming first-hand along with many commodity displays. Tour information - call 1-800-332-9744 or 419 941-0454. Spend a day in Headwaters Country....

Canadian Highlight Sale

September 29

70 lots of Angus Cattle

Cows with calves at foot

Bred Heifers

2007 Bull and Heifer calves

Smith Falls, ON

Complimentary beef barbecue at noon

For more details, contact Rob Holowaychuck at (403) 341-5098

7th Annual Cream of the Crop Special Edition II Blonde d'Aquitaine Sale

October 13

PLEASE NOTE TIME CHANGE TO 4pm (not 7pm)

Hoards Station Sale Barn

Deadline: August 18

Sponsored by: Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association

For more details: Marcel Lachance (705) 639-2183, Laverne McGee (705) 653-3160, Dave McNeven (705) 295-6208

View Colour Catalogue online at <http://www.ontarioblondes.com/events.html>

First Annual Blonde Influence Stocker Sale

October 19

11am

Hoards Station Sale Barn

Cost: \$10/head commission

Deadline: Entries close October 6.

Sponsored by: Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association
Further Details:

Calves must be at least 50% blonde. 350 head expected. Commission \$10/head. Commercial breeders welcome. A selection committee will view entries. All entries must meet Laura's Lean requirements.
Sale Selection Committee: Marcel Lachance (705) 639-2183 or Laverne McGee (705) 653-3160

Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

November 2-11
The Direct Energy Centre, Exhibition Place, Toronto
<http://www.royalfair.org/>

Complete Dispersal of Great Northern Genetics Red Angus as well as The Walnut Drive Polled Hereford Production Sale

November 14
7pm

...and commercial cowherd sale, as well as breeder bulls. Approx. 250 head sell at Cargill auction Market North of Walkerton, Ontario. Wed
Listings available sale day. For info contact John W. Vancise, RR #4 Stayner. Phone: (705)-445-0407 or Cell (705) 441-4048. Email john.vancise@sympatico.ca

Eastern Canadian Gelbvieh Assoc. Annual Sale

November 24
1:30pm

David Carson's Farm and Auction, Listowel
Consignment Deadline: Sept. 22, 2007
Contact: Carolyn Porteous (705) 742-9759

Environmental Farm Plan Workshops – Bruce County

Start times 10am. No charge.

There are separate upcoming workshops on Oct 12 and Nov 5. Please call or email to register. Producers are invited to attend workshops to gain knowledge on best management practices, develop an action plan for their farm and learn about government cost-share funding projects that are available. For more details visit www.ontariosoilcrop.org

Jayne Dietrich: bruce@ontariosoilcrop.org or (519) 367 5930.

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This report prepared with the assistance of Dr. Doug Powell's team at the Universities of Guelph and Kansas State. This service does not allow emails to be sent by responding to this email directly. If you have questions or comments, please contact Lianne Appleby at lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca

A) Consumer Federation of America to Congress: Protect our health, don't disembowel federal meat and poultry inspection

13.sep.07

Consumer Federation of America
Carol Tucker-Foreman

Good morning. I'm Carol Tucker Foreman of Consumer Federation of America. I'm here to urge all Americans in joining us to demand that Congress not disembowel the federal meat and poultry inspection system.

The U.S. Congress is a threat to public health. The House of Representatives has turned back the clock on federal food safety standards. Forty years ago Congress created the federal meat inspection system because low state safety standards threatened public health. They required that no meat or poultry can be sold in interstate commerce until a federal inspector, sworn to protect public health, verifies that the product is safe, wholesome and accurately labeled. American consumers recognize and count on the safety of meat and poultry products that bear the label, "Inspected and Approved, U.S. Department of Agriculture."

The House passed Farm Bill abandons federal inspection for all but a few giant plants. It takes us back to the old days when state inspected meat could be sold anywhere in the U.S. and exported to foreign countries. It puts our health at the mercy of a multitude of state inspection programs that vary in rigor and science and ability to withstand political pressure. The Senate seems ready to follow this bad example. Supporters claim their goal is to help small meat and poultry processing businesses and give cattle and poultry producers new markets. They argue that very small plants can't meet detailed federal inspection requirements and federal inspectors aren't sympathetic or understanding of the problems that small packers have.

They're wrong on the facts.

Thousands of successful very small plants, located in every state in the Union, operate under federal inspection. Almost three thousand of the 5,603 federally inspected meat and poultry plants have ten or fewer employees. These plants meet federal requirements and sell anywhere they want. Why is Congress setting up a system that serves the meat companies that can't or aren't willing to meet those same standards?

The bill goes far beyond very small plants. It permits plants with 50 or fewer employees to opt for state inspection and sell across state lines. The Farm Bill makes eighty percent of all federally inspected plants eligible to leave federal inspection and switch to state inspection. Further, it allows plants to switch from federal to state inspection and back again every four years. The result will be an effective end to federal inspection and administrative havoc and those conditions will surely lead to more sick people and more deaths.

Their priorities are wrong too. Vigorous meat and poultry inspection is a vital public health program. Foodborne illness makes 76 million Americans sick each year, sends 325,000 Americans to the hospital and kills 5,000 of us. The members of Consumer Federation of America want all food safety inspectors to put us and our families first, not worry about whether they're being too tough on some inept meat packer. This bill sends a deadly wrong message.

State meat and poultry inspection programs do not always provide protection that is "equal to" federal health standards. USDA's Inspector General has said state inspection systems don't police safety problems in plants and FSIS doesn't police the state inspection systems. FSIS reviewers reported that

state inspectors didn't close down plants where cutting boards were contaminated with meat from the previous day's work and others that weren't checking to be sure cooking temperatures were high enough to kill bacteria.

The bill says nothing about a vital public health issue--how can states protect public health when state inspected adulterated meat or poultry has left the state where it was produced? When bad meat is making people sick government must act quickly and efficiently to track it down and get it off the shelves before the toll grows higher. How can one state, with no legal authority or staff on the ground in other states, get adulterated meat or poultry off the shelf and out of home refrigerators. No one in Congress has even tried to address this vital problem.

This kind of legislation gives Congress a bad name. No one has asked or answered these hard questions. The House never held a hearing on the state inspection provisions. There was no debate on the House floor. The Senate hasn't held hearings either. They've just huddled with the special interests that demand passage.

American consumers must defend ourselves and our families. We have to step in and demand Congress not jeopardize our safety. We need to treat this bill the way USDA inspectors treat bad meat--look at it closely, test it for safety, then mark it "inspected and rejected."

B) USDA's Johanns, HHS' Leavitt highlight import safety at Kansas City meat processing plant

12.sep.07

United States Department of Agriculture

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=2007/09/0243.xml>

As part of a nationwide fact-finding by the President's Interagency Working Group on Import Safety, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns and U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary Michael Leavitt today focused on import safety as it relates to meat processing, during a visit to a small meat processing plant established for 75 years in Kansas City's historic stockyard district.

"There is growing demand in the U.S. for a wider variety of foods from around the world and we are committed to ensuring our food safety system keeps pace," said Johanns. "Our goal is to continue to provide a safe and wholesome food supply and to maintain public confidence."

"Americans benefit from one of the safest food supplies, and we have among the highest standards for consumer protection in the world. Our import system does many things right and we intend to keep it that way. But we've got to continue to adapt to a rapidly growing and changing global economy. The American people have reasonable expectations that food and other products that they buy are safe. We can and should do all we can to honor that trust," said Leavitt.

Boyle's Famous Corned Beef imports meat products from several countries. These products are inspected by USDA'S Food Safety and Inspection Service at U.S. ports of entry. During further processing, products are subject to daily inspection as required in domestic federally inspected establishments to ensure safety and wholesomeness.

As the working group chair, Secretary Leavitt has investigated the effectiveness of current import safety regulations and standards. On Monday, Leavitt presented the President with an initial report in the form of a strategic framework which lays out the principles upon which more specific recommendations will be based. These recommendations will be part of an Action Plan scheduled to be released in November. Immediately following the meat processing tour, Secretary Johanns and Secretary Leavitt met with stakeholders to discuss recommendations for import safety regulations and practices.

On October 1, 2007 USDA will host a public meeting at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Jefferson Auditorium in Washington, D.C. to provide consumers and advocates an opportunity to offer comments about import safety. Details about the public meeting and comment period, the Strategic Framework and other import safety information are available at www.importsafety.gov.

C) Marler Clark files E. coli lawsuit against Oregon meat supplier

10.sep.07

from a press release

Seattle -- A lawsuit was filed today against Interstate Meats, Inc., the Clackamas, Oregon, meat producer whose ground beef products were identified as the source of an E. coli O157:H7 outbreak among

Washington, Oregon, and Idaho residents in July and August. The lawsuit was filed in Federal District Court for the Western District of Washington by Marler Clark on behalf of Brian Leamon, a 21-year-old King County resident who became ill with an E. coli O157:H7 infection and was hospitalized for three days after eating Interstate Meats ground beef.

The lawsuit is the first filed by Marler Clark in connection with the Interstate Meats E. coli outbreak, although the firm represents several other victims of the outbreak, and more lawsuits could follow. At least nine people -- two from Oregon, six from Washington, and one from Idaho -- became ill during the outbreak.

"Since 2002, the number of meat recalls and E. coli outbreaks connected to ground beef had been steadily declining, and our focus shifted from contamination in meat processing facilities to spinach and lettuce fields -- until now," said William Marler, Mr. Leamon's attorney, noting that over 6.5 million pounds of meat have been recalled this year for potential E. coli contamination. Marler continued, "As The Terminator would say, 'E. coli in ground beef is baaaack.'"

In April, Richwood Meat Co. of Merced, California, recalled 107,900 pounds of frozen ground beef products, and HFX of South Claysburg, Pennsylvania, recalled 4,900 pounds of meat products. Both companies' products had been linked to E. coli outbreaks.

In May, PM Beef Holdings of Windom, Minnesota, recalled 117,500 pounds of beef trim products, and Davis Creek Meats and Seafood of Kalamazoo, Michigan, recalled 129,000 pounds of beef products after their products were linked to E. coli outbreaks.

In June, the Meat Market of Fresno, California, recalled tri-tip and United Food Group of Vernon, California, recalled 5.7 million pounds of ground beef when the products were identified as the source of E. coli outbreaks, and Tyson Fresh Meats of Sherman, Texas, recalled 440,000 pounds of ground beef for possible E. coli contamination.

In July, Custom Pack of Hastings, Nebraska, recalled 5,920 pounds of ground beef and buffalo products due to potential E. coli contamination after illness was linked to consumption of the company's products. In August, Interstate Meats issued its ground beef recall after Mr. Leamon and eight others became ill with E. coli infections.

For further information, please contact attorney Dave Babcock at 206-346- 1885 or dbabcock@marlerclark.com.

D) Nearly a year to the day after shutdown, the raw milk inspectors come calling at organic pastures

09.sep.07

The Complete Patient

<http://www.thecompletepatient.com/journal/nearly-a-year-to-the-day-after-shutdown-the-raw-milk-inspect.html>

The sense of déjà vu was eerie. First the California Department of Food and Agriculture posted a press release on its site: It had ordered a recall of raw cream produced by Organic Pastures Dairy Co.

Then the Associated Press came out with a story, which was published by the San Jose Mercury News, one of the state's largest newspapers. *Listeria monocytogenes* had been found in some of the cream, which "can cause the serious infections in children and the elderly. Healthy adults can experience symptoms including fevers, severe headaches, nausea and diarrhea."

Associated Press is one of the largest news services in the world, yet it didn't bother with comment from anyone at Organic Pastures (or even indicate no one could be reached).

It was September 21, 2006, when CDFA officials issued their first recall, and eventually shut down the state's largest raw milk dairy for two weeks, after five children believed to have consumed raw milk became ill. (The photo above, from Organic Pastures, shows two federal Food and Drug Administration agents taking samples from the farm's soil in their search for E.coli during the shutdown.) The illnesses, four of which came from a common strain of E.coli O157:H7, were never connected definitively to bacteria at Organic Pastures.

The way Mark McAfee, Organic Pastures' owner, explained it to me, the listeria m finding in his dairy's cream sounded very similar to findings at several New York and Pennsylvania raw milk dairies over the last few months. "After nine days of testing a sample, they got a positive reading," he said. He said he was told by a state lab official that the finding "was considered to be subclinical." He said technicians "put

the milk in a petrie dish and use a special broth that suppresses the growth of other bacteria to encourage the growth of the listeria. By definition, the listeria they get is an extremely low level.”

The recall order applied to 200 pints of cream sent to 45 stores, out of 300 stores that normally carry Organic Pastures products. Nearly all the cream had already been purchased, and no one has become ill, Mark told me. Similarly, in New York and Pennsylvania listeria m. cases, no one has become ill.

Mark says his dairy tests samples of all milk that leave the dairy for E.coli 0157:H7. “But we screwed up by not testing for a broader range of bacteria.”

Organic Pastures has just in the last few days purchased special equipment that “will test for all the politically significant bacteria—camphylobacter, E.coli, listeria, and salmonella...We probably should have been doing that before.”

He said the cream in question actually came from a dairy in Northern California that produces raw organic milk because, “We can’t make enough cream to satisfy our own customers.”

Mark criticized the state’s testing and announcement procedures. “This is a huge to-do about nothing because the conditions in the lab are not human conditions...They did not shut us down...Yesterday at a farmers market people were giving us high-fives because we are still selling milk.”

He added that he expects demand for raw milk to increase yet again. “Every time this happens, the people who want whole food are stirred up even more.”

Nor has he lost any of his combativeness. “We are in a place that is politically incorrect...I am in the business of producing good bacteria...But every opportunity they (government regulators) have they will stick a knife in our back.”

E) Unpasteurized milk gets new color

07.sep.07

Associated Press

<http://barfblog.foodsafety.ksu.edu/2007/09/articles/raw-milk/this-one-tastes-like-the-cow-got-into-an-onion-patch/index.html>

Raleigh, NC -- A new rule approved Friday by the state Board of Agriculture says that unpasteurized milk sold as pet food must now be dyed a charcoal-gray color and labeled as not for human consumption. North Carolina farmers are allowed to sell raw milk only for consumption by pets and other animals, not for humans to drink.

Public health officials say pasteurization is necessary to kill harmful pathogens. Raw milk advocates say the process removes the beverage's natural health benefits, and they want to be allowed to openly buy untreated milk.

The Board of Agriculture unanimously approved the rules changes Friday with the intent of limiting diseases officials believe can be carried in raw milk. The charcoal color was chosen to clearly differentiate the product from standard milk and make raw milk unappealing to children.

Joe Reardon, director of the Agriculture Department's Food and Drug Protection Division, was cited as saying citizens have called to complain about the pet milk that looked similar to the pasteurized type, adding, "From time to time, some of the concerned parents would call us and say their child drank some of milk that was intended for pet use, and their child did become ill from it."

Alice Hall, who helped found the North Carolina Natural Milk Campaign, was cited as saying the charcoal-colored additive will take milk out of its pure form and discourage raw milk drinkers from buying the product, adding, "I'm so disheartened. As a consumer, I have the right to go to the grocery store and buy what we want."

The milk rule is scheduled to take effect at the beginning of November, pending review by the state Rules Review Commission.

F) Consumers are responsible for beef safety too

07.sep.07

Cattle Network

<http://www.cattlenetwork.com/content.asp?contentid=158598>

There is no doubt that every sector of the beef industry is responsible for producing wholesome and safe beef. The safety of our beef supply starts in the pasture and ends at the dinner plate. Before the final

retail product reaches the hands of a consumer, several “best management practices” have already taken place. Producers and cattle feeders follow beef quality assurance guidelines that focus on strict management methods to prevent quality defects. During fabrication and preparation all packers, retailers, and food service vendors follow and comply with steps that are outlined in their Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) manual. HACCP is a system that ensures that food safety practices are being applied and monitored during steps in production or preparation where there is a high risk of introducing a biological, physical, or chemical hazard. The aforementioned practices are vital in keeping our beef supply safe, but the issue of beef safety does not stop here.

Consumers play an important role in beef safety as well. Each year it is estimated that there are over 3 million foodborne illness cases in the United States. The vast majority of these cases occur at the consumer level due to inadequate handling, cross contamination of raw meat products, and insufficient cooking methods. Consumers may take for granted the safety of their beef supply and, therefore, may think it will remain safe until preparation. An area that has not been heavily researched is the transport and handling of foods by the consumer from the grocery store to the home refrigerator. Not everyone lives right next to a grocery store, so it is anticipated that beef products will undergo a period of time when storage temperature will be inadequate. A study reported in 2005, found that out of 551 consumers there were 266 consumers (48%) that took 20 minutes to over one hour to return home from the grocery store. Beef can become contaminated with pathogens if it reaches temperatures that support pathogenic growth. During transportation of 20 minutes or more in a standard grocery bag, temperature of cold food items, like raw meat, can start to rise. This increase in temperature can allow for the growth of foodborne pathogens. Thus, once a beef product leaves the store, it should be at room temperature or in the car as little time as possible. Room temperature or temperatures between 40° F and 140° F provides an ideal climate for a variety of pathogens. Placing beef in a cooler or in the coolest part of the car until refrigeration will help maintain a safe temperature.

Safe handling practices from the grocery store to the home refrigerator is of little use if the home refrigerator is not at the proper temperature. Amazingly, very few consumers know the correct refrigerator temperature. If a consumer does not have a thermometer in the refrigerator, getting the refrigerator to the correct temperature is quite difficult. Consumers may analyze refrigeration temperature by evaluating food items (i.e. checking to see if the milk jug is cold). This method of determining temperature is insufficient. Just because food items may feel cold, it does not mean that the proper refrigeration temperature is being maintained. As a rule of thumb, meat should be refrigerated at 40° F or less and frozen at 0° F or below. A common pathogen associated with raw meat is *E. coli* O157:H7. This harmful pathogen can multiply at temperatures as low as 44° F. Therefore, thawing beef at room temperature is not a responsible safety practice. When thawing beef, handling practices are extremely important. There are three ways to safely defrost beef. Thawing beef in the refrigerator is safe because the temperature of the beef is kept cold and prevents pathogenic growth. If going to be cooked right away, it is also safe to defrost beef in the microwave or in cold water.

Cross contamination is another safety concern. A common place for cross contamination to occur is in the grocery bag. Juices from raw meat products can drip onto other food items. This can be prevented by individually wrapping raw meat products and keeping them separate during transport. The kitchen is another good source of cross contamination. Raw meat products stored in the refrigerator can drip onto other food items if not wrapped and stored in the meat compartment of the refrigerator. Kitchen utensils such as knives and cutting boards can also spread pathogens from one food product to the next if not cleaned properly. Although cross contamination of raw meat products can be a problem, most instances can readily be solved with adequate cooking temperatures. Different beef retail cuts have different methods and ways in which they can be prepared. Regardless of retail cut, cooking ground hamburger patties, steaks, or roasts to an internal temperature of 160° F is a sufficient temperature Consumers are Responsible for Beef Safety Too for killing harmful pathogens. Consumers may like to rely on color to determine temperature. The majority of consumers who prepare meat at home rely on visual cues to evaluate doneness. This can be deceiving when using a cooking method such as grilling. Grilling can cause beef to turn brown very fast on the outside, which may lead a consumer to think that the proper cooking temperature has been reached. Because color can not accurately determine temperature, it is not safe to use the color of beef as an indicator of safety. The only way to ensure that an internal temperature of 160° F has been reached is to use a thermometer. The use of a thermometer will also help the consumer to avoid the overcooking of beef products as well.

Consumers do share the responsibility of ensuring the safety of beef products in addition to the producers, feeders, packers, and retailers. Educating the consumer on proper handling and preparation of beef is an ongoing effort. It is good that consumers are confident in the safety of their beef supply, but at the same time it is important that they aware of potential safety risks that can occur after purchasing the product. Through continuous awareness and education on how to properly handle, transport, and prepare beef at home, the occurrence of foodborne illness due to improper consumer handling can be reduced and/or eliminated. For more information about food safety practices visit the University of Minnesota Food Safety Team website at <http://www.extension.umn.edu/foodsafety>.

Source: Lori Weddle-Schott, U of M Beef Center, www.extension.umn.edu/beef

G) Consumers are responsible for beef safety too

07.sep.07

Marler Blog

Botulism Attorney

<http://www.marlerblog.com/2007/09/articles/lawyer-oped/consumers-are-responsible-for-beef-safety-too/index.html>

Or, the Meat Industry believes that it is the consumer's responsibility to get cow shit out of its product. Seriously, can you think of one consumer product that the manufacturer expects you to fix it AFTER they make it and BEFORE you use it.

I just read an article in "Cattle Networks" about industry irresponsibility and consumer responsibility. Please read the whole article by clicking on the below photo:

Consumers may take for granted the safety of their beef supply and, therefore, may think it will remain safe until preparation.

Think how often you see advertising for eating meat and how often you see advertising explaining the dangers of bacterial or viral contamination – right, never

First, let me make this very clear, what the meat industry is trying to say is that it is OK to have cow shit in your meat and you should buy a lot, but just handle it like it is radioactive and may kill you or your children.

Not everyone lives right next to a grocery store, so it is anticipated that beef products will undergo a period of time when storage temperature will be inadequate. Beef can become contaminated with pathogens if it reaches temperatures that support pathogenic growth.

Does the beef industry really expect consumers to all own refrigerated trunks or carry coolers to the store to handle the toxic substance?

Again, get the cow shit out of our hamburger and perfect storing temperature, important yes, but less life threatening.

A common place for cross contamination to occur is in the grocery bag. Juices from raw meat products can drip onto other food items.

I'm sorry; this is the consumer's responsibility?

Raw meat products stored in the refrigerator can drip onto other food items if not wrapped and stored in the meat compartment of the refrigerator.

Come on - get the poop out. As the folks at www.donteatpoop.com say – "Don't Eat Poop."

Although cross contamination of raw meat products can be a problem, most instances can readily be solved with adequate cooking temperatures. Different beef retail cuts have different methods and ways in which they can be prepared. Regardless of retail cut, cooking ground hamburger patties, steaks, or roasts to an internal temperature of 160° F is a sufficient temperature. The majority of consumers who prepare meat at home rely on visual cues to evaluate doneness. This can be deceiving when using a cooking method such as grilling. Grilling can cause beef to turn brown very fast on the outside, which may lead a consumer to think that the proper cooking temperature has been reached. Because color cannot accurately determine temperature, it is not safe to use the color of beef as an indicator of safety. The only way to ensure that an internal temperature of 160° F has been reached is to use a thermometer.

OK, honestly, who has a thermometer and who uses it?

Since 2002, the number of meat recalls and E. coli outbreaks connected to ground beef had been steadily declining, and our focus shifted from contamination in meat processing facilities to spinach and lettuce

fields—until now. Since January, over 6.5 million pounds of meat have been recalled this year for potential E. coli contamination. Some interesting real facts:

In April, Richwood Meat Co. of Merced, California, recalled 107,900 pounds of frozen ground beef products, and HFX of South Claysburg, Pennsylvania, recalled 4,900 pounds of meat products. Both companies' products had been linked to E. coli outbreaks.

In May, PM Beef Holdings of Windom, Minnesota, recalled 117,500 pounds of beef trim products, and Davis Creek Meats and Seafood of Kalamazoo, Michigan, recalled 129,000 pounds of beef products after their products were linked to E. coli outbreaks.

In June, the Meat Market of Fresno, California, recalled tri-tip and United Food Group of Vernon, California, recalled 5.7 million pounds of ground beef when the products were identified as the source of E. coli outbreaks, and Tyson Fresh Meats of Sherman, Texas, recalled 440,000 pounds of ground beef for possible E. coli contamination.

In July, Custom Pack of Hastings, Neb. recalled 5,920 pounds of ground beef and buffalo products due to potential E. coli contamination after illness was linked to consumption of the company's products.

In August, Interstate Meats issued its ground beef recall after nine became ill with E. coli infections.

So far in September, Fairbank Farms of Ashville, N.Y., voluntarily recalled 884 pounds of ground beef products because they may be contaminated with E. coli O157:H7, the U.S.

So, meat industry - get the poop out.

H) FSIS plans HACCP outreach to small plants

07.sep.07

Meatingplace.com

Janie Gabbett

<http://www.meatingplace.com/MembersOnly/webNews/details.aspx?item=18812>

In a recently released review of USDA's Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (PR/HACCP) rules, the agency concluded the benefits outweigh the burden to small and very small meat and poultry plants, but there are a number of outreach strategies that should be implemented to help processors comply.

Federal agencies are required to review rules that have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities within 10 years of implementation. USDA's HACCP rules began in 1996. USDA began its review in 2005.

The final report, released Aug. 31, called for USDA outreach to small and very small plants in the following ways:

Providing one-stop service and easy access for obtaining information

Providing a full range of technical assistance

Developing new materials to meet unmet needs, including an electronic HACCP plan development tool that will assist small and very small plants in developing a HACCP plan

Providing access and resources to support training for small and very small plants and to ensure that FSIS employees and partners have training to assist them in outreach activities

Strengthening partnerships to support and enhance the effectiveness of outreach strategies

Identifying small and very small plants' needs through regular and ongoing needs assessment

Conducting regular evaluations of outreach activities

Leveraging existing resources

"By taking the above-mentioned steps, FSIS will strengthen its HACCP program and further enhance food safety for meat and poultry products," the report said.

I) Are Foot and Mouth outbreaks linked?

13.sep.07

Sky News

<http://news.sky.com/skynews/article/0,,30100-1283879,00.html?f=rss>

Scientists are, according to this story, finding out if the latest foot-and-mouth outbreak is the same strain which infected herds last month.

The infection of cattle on farmland in Egham, Surrey, comes just a week after the Environment Secretary declared Britain to be free of the disease.

Earlier Prime Minister Gordon Brown pledged the Government would do everything in its power to get to the "root causes" of the latest foot and mouth outbreak in Surrey.

A three kilometre exclusion zone has also been set up around a farm at Hindolveston, in Norfolk, where it is believed a pig is being tested.

A Defra spokesman was quoted as saying "This is a precautionary measure, at this stage disease has not been confirmed."

J) British pigs, sheep tested after cattle hit by disease

12.sep.07

Agence France Presse

London -- Pigs in eastern England and a sheep in Scotland were, according to this story, being tested Wednesday for foot-and-mouth disease following a new outbreak among cattle in Britain.

Britain's chief veterinarian Debby Reynolds was quoted as saying "there are other reported cases being investigated, including one in Norfolk in some pigs, where foot and mouth disease can't be ruled out.", adding, "It's not strongly suspected, it can't be ruled out."

A three-kilometre (two-mile) protection zone restricting the movement of animals was imposed around the pig farm in the county of Norfolk, said the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

The Scottish government was quoted as saying in a statement that "a single sheep at an auction mart is showing signs of ill health and, as a routine biosecurity measure, is being tested by vets" in Lanark, near Glasgow.

The statement played down the seriousness of the case, adding that 130 tests in England and Scotland were carried out during the August outbreak of foot and mouth disease in England.

K) Czech Republic hit with first mad cow case in 2007

12.sep.07

Agence France Presse

Prague -- The Czech Republic has, according to this story, discovered its first case of mad cow disease so far this year, the country's State Veterinary Administration (SVS) reported Wednesday.

A 11-year-old cow was found infected with bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or BSE, the 27th case in total for the Czech Republic.

Eight infected animals were found in 2005, three more in 2006, while the first case occurred in 2001.

"The trend corresponds to those cows registered in other European Union countries where the number of diagnosed BSE cases is also on the decline," SVS was quoted as saying in a statement.

Obligatory BSE screening in the Czech Republic is made on the brains of slaughtered animals 30 months old or more.

L) Eating less meat may slow climate change

12.sep.07

New York Times

Reuters

http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/world/AP-Eating-Less-Meat.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

London -- Eating less meat could, according to this story, help slow global warming by reducing the number of livestock and thereby decreasing the amount of methane flatulence from the animals, scientists said on Thursday.

In a special energy and health series of the medical journal The Lancet, experts were cited as saying that people should eat fewer steaks and hamburgers. Reducing global red meat consumption by 10 percent, they added, would cut the gases emitted by cows, sheep and goats that contribute to global warming.

"We are at a significant tipping point," Geri Brewster, a nutritionist at Northern Westchester Hospital in New York, who was not connected to the study was quoted as saying, adding "If people knew that they were threatening the environment by eating more meat, they might think twice before ordering a burger." Other ways of reducing greenhouse gases from farming practices, like feeding animals higher-quality grains, would only have a limited impact on cutting emissions. Gases from animals destined for dinner plates account for nearly a quarter of all emissions worldwide.

Dr. John Powles, a public health expert at Cambridge University, one of the study's authors was quoted as saying "That leaves reducing demand for meat as the only real option."

The amount of meat eaten varies considerably worldwide. In developed countries, people typically eat about 224 grams per day. But in Africa, most people only get about 31 grams a day.

With demand for meat increasing worldwide, experts worry that this increased livestock production will mean more gases like methane and nitrous oxide heating up the atmosphere. In China, for instance, people are eating double the amount of meat they used to a decade ago.

The story goes on to say that eating less red meat would also improve health in general. Powles and his co-authors estimate that reducing meat consumption would reduce the numbers of people with heart disease and cancer.

M) S.Korea discovers banned ribs in imported U.S. beef

12.sep.07

Xinhua News Agency (China)

Seoul -- South Korea has, according to this story, found a box of imported U.S. beef containing banned parts from an unauthorized U. S. meat packaging facility, which has been the third such incident since quarantine inspections of U.S. beef resumed late last month, the South Korean government said on Wednesday.

Rib bones were found in one box of an 17.8-ton shipment that arrived in South Korea on Aug. 5, said a statement of the state- run National Veterinary Research and Quarantine Service.

The entire shipment from that facility will be returned to the United States, it added.

N) Ministry: End BSE tests on young cows

12.sep.07

The Asahi Shimbun

<http://www.asahi.com/english/Herald-asahi/TKY200709110524.html>

The health ministry has, according to this story, called on all prefectural and municipal governments-- without exception--to end mad cow disease tests of cattle under 21 months next July.

The directive came after nine prefectural governments said in an Asahi Shimbun survey they intended to continue the tests even after the central government stops funding them next July.

In the survey, conducted two months ago, the governments was cited as saying they want to continue testing to allay safety concerns and to meet the requests of consumers.

In a notice dated Aug. 31, however, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare was quoted as saying "It is important that (all the prefectural and municipal governments) end their inspections at the end of July 2008, across the board."

It also said, "It would cause chaos among producers and distributors as well as concern among consumers if the approach of individual governments toward the tests varies from one to another."

Tatsuya Kakita, an expert on food labeling and a representative of the Yokohama-based research institute on consumer issues, criticized the ministry's instruction, saying it was aimed at limiting the choice of consumers.

The ministry plans to terminate its funding of the entire cost of the tests of cattle aged 20 months or younger for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or mad cow disease.

The ministry was cited as saying that if the beef of some districts are marketed with a label mentioning the all-cattle tests, it will give the impression that beef from other districts are not as safe.

Officials with the health ministry's Inspection and Safety Division called the continued checks on cattle not older than 20 months as a step "close to the waste of taxpayers' money." It said that there had been no cows in this age group suspected of having the infection.

O) Colorado shouldn't target kids via federal premise ID program

12.sep.07

Greenly Tribune

Rep. Jerry Sonnenberg

<http://www.greeleytrib.com/article/20070912/READERS/109120079>

Rep. Jerry Sonnenberg, who serves Colorado's 65th House District writes that even in its best light, it is still no more than heavy-handed government beating up on children. I'm talking about the Colorado Department of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension through Colorado State University taking a federal voluntary premise identification program and turning it into a mandated program for 4-H and FFA kids who show livestock in Colorado.

To give you a little background, the National Animal Identification Program is a federal plan to allow producers to register their ranch into a national database to provide information in case of a disease outbreak in America. It remains voluntary because we have a fairly good system that has been in place for decades to trace animals. That system has worked before when we found a cow with mad cow disease and were able to track its movement out of Canada.

So why do we need to force the kids who show animals at their county and state fairs to register in a federal database? That's the same question I have.

This plan is scheduled to be mandated to all county fairs for 2008 and was implemented at the state fair this year, bringing a firestorm of controversy. There were kids who elected not to take animals to Pueblo because of this policy, and then a couple of youth were removed from the sale for not complying with the mandate. How many kids will leave these youth programs because of this unwarranted mandate?

Now you might say that 4-H and FFA are organizations that you choose to belong to so you should have to abide by their mandates and I would agree, except that the county fairs and especially the state fair are held using taxpayer dollars. These organizations are just one piece of the much larger fair event and are now making an attempt to hold these fairs hostage.

The purpose of the federal premise ID program is to find all of the animals that an infected animal has had contact with in a short period of time. These young people who are now being targeted have better records than any commercial operation in which pens of cattle or livestock are put together in load-lots.

These young people in most cases know where each and every one of their animals was born and raised and the progeny of their project. This is not the group that will benefit the premise ID vision and seems to be no more than heavy-handed rule-making with a solution looking for a problem.

There are more pressing issues that need to be addressed at the state level. I shouldn't have to spend this amount of time on issues like this. However, as an elected official I have made it a priority to keep government from sticking its nose where it doesn't belong.

P) Animal disease control 'biggest need', US lagging behind other countries

07.sep.07

From a press release

Bowling Green, KY -- More than 85 percent of those completing an informal survey at ID•INFO EXPO 2007 believe the United States is not keeping pace with other developed countries regarding animal traceability systems for marketing and disease control purposes.

ID•INFO EXPO 2007, held August 28-30, in Kansas City, is an event hosted by the National Institute for Animal Agriculture (NIAA). More than 400 people from allied industries, government, academia, and producers attended the event, which included a trade show with 23 exhibitors.

Animal disease control topped the list when respondents ranked "the biggest needs for implementing animal traceability systems." The second biggest need for implementing animal traceability systems, according to this audience, was export of livestock products. Value-added livestock marketing was next while food safety and country of origin labeling ranked fourth and fifth, respectively. Under the "other" needs category appeared "mandatory," "decreased costs of production," "a secure data collection system" and "expansion of the Locate in 48 program."

When posed the question "What level of participation do you feel is necessary for the premises registration under NAIS to become an effective tool in supporting animal disease traceability?" nine (9)

out of ten (10) respondents agreed that "80 to 100 percent" participation would be necessary. Of the remaining respondents, just 6.67 percent thought "60 to 80 percent" would be required while 3.33 percent answered "40 to 60 percent" participation. Not one person marked the "less than 40 percent" participation box.

"Incorporate and require ID standards throughout all existing disease programs" and the "other" category received the highest rankings when individuals were asked "What steps do you feel can be taken today that will give the biggest boost toward enhancing participation in a national animal disease traceability system?"

About half of respondents who checked the "other" category saw "mandatory" as the answer to enhancing participation. "Other" write-ins that moved this category to be ranked as the biggest boost included "public education," "create a business plan and stick to it," "guarantee privacy and limit liability to producers for infractions" and "make it an industry-run program."

More details on the survey and ID•INFO EXPO 2007 can be found in the NIAA's Newsletter, *animalagriculturequarterly*, which is available at www.animalagriculture.org. While at that website, visitors might also wish to click on the "Proceedings" button for all presentations from the event.

The National Institute for Animal Agriculture provides a forum for building consensus and advancing solutions for animal agriculture and provides continuing education and communication linkages for animal agriculture professionals. NIAA is dedicated to programs that: work towards the eradication of disease that pose risk to the health of animals, wildlife and humans; promote a safe and wholesome from supply for our nation and abroad; and promote best practices in environmental stewardship, animal health and well-being. NIAA members represent all facets of animal agriculture.

Q) Kansas State University establishes Center for Animal Identification Technologies

07.sep.07

From a press release

MANHATTAN, Kan. -- Scientists at Kansas State University have long been involved in many facets of livestock research, but now they taking their work a giant step further.

The establishment of the Kansas State University Center for Animal Identification will allow researchers to build on the work K-State has already begun in evaluating identification systems such as radio frequency to trace animal movement, said K-State animal science professor, Dale Blasi. He will work with other K-State faculty and students to carry out the center's work.

"Our mission," Blasi said, "is to discover, develop and evaluate livestock identification technologies that might have economic value to livestock producers in Kansas and the United States."

The issue is particularly critical in Kansas, where the beef industry generated \$6.25 billion in cash receipts and ranked first in the United States in commercial cattle processed in 2006, according to the Kansas Agricultural Statistics Service.

Blasi has headed the university's Animal Identification Knowledge Laboratory since it was established in 2003. Underpinned by USDA funding, K-State established the lab to provide unbiased evaluation of animal identification technologies being considered by livestock industries. The new center is a logical way to expand on the lab's efforts, he said.

The center will be based in K-State's Department of Animal Sciences and Industry, where Blasi is a beef cattle specialist with K-State Research and Extension. Much of the work will be done at the university's Beef Stocker Unit, where there is ready access to large numbers of livestock in typical livestock management situations.

The importance of the need to be able to trace an individual animal's movements has become increasingly apparent during the past five years, he said. The foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in 2001 that rocked Britain's livestock industry marked one of many high profile events that raised consumers' consciousness about tracing animal movements. Since then, cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in Canada and the United States further reinforced the notion that the United States needed a way to be able to track an animal's movement from the beginning of its life to the end.

In April, 2004, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced a plan to implement a National Animal Identification System (NAIS), which will allow for rapid identification, containment, and eradication of potential foreign animal diseases.

That USDA action, in turn, sparked the development of new electronic and biometric animal identification technologies, which made the need for unbiased evaluation and dissemination of results on those technologies crucial, Blasi said.

In fact, in a July 2007 report, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) stated that the U.S. Department of Agriculture "needs to resolve several key implementation issues to achieve rapid and effective (animal) disease traceback." Among its findings were that "the USDA had not established a robust process for selecting, standardizing, and testing animal ID and tracking technologies."

"Our objective is to give producers good information on existing technologies, as well as any emerging technologies, to help them better manage their businesses," Blasi said.

"Animal Identification and traceability will be increasingly important to both domestic and international beef consumers in the coming decade," said Dee Likes, executive vice president of the Kansas Livestock Association, an organization that represents the business interests of more than 5,700 beef producers.

"With the Center for Animal Identification, K-State is uniquely positioned to provide the foundation of knowledge and technical expertise for the beef industry to productively embrace the future."

Livestock producers are not the only group who will benefit from K-State's new effort.

"The National Animal ID System has so many outstanding questions and concerns among the Livestock Marketing Association's membership that we are very grateful to have a very professional, unbiased, science-based resource, within the Kansas State University Center for Animal Identification, to help us determine what animal identification technologies and its individual components work and do not work for livestock markets," said Nancy Robinson, vice president of government and industry affairs with the Livestock Marketing Association.

"The livestock industry and its various sectors and federal and state animal health officials would find it very difficult to move forward with a national animal ID program without the K-State Animal ID Center," Robinson said. The LMA is an organization of livestock marketing firms that provides industry information, insurance and legislative and regulatory services to its members.

"This (center) will also give K-State students the opportunity to learn about animal identification through working with us during internships and honors classes," Blasi said.

In addition, researchers plan to provide independent performance evaluation services to vendors of animal identification technology.

K-State collaborators in the new center include Kevin Dhuyvetter and Ted Schroeder in the department of agricultural economics; Jim Higgins in the department of statistics; and Tim Sobering in the electronics design laboratory.

Other collaborators include the Kansas Animal Health Department; the Kansas Department of Commerce; numerous meat packing companies; auction markets; and animal identification technology companies.



Got News?

If you would like to post your cattle industry news or event, send your information by Thursday at 4pm to lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca or submit through the OCA Web site: <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/calendar/calendar.asp>.

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