

SMA InfoMeat

July 24, 2006

Email: sma@tca.net

Volume 27, Issue 4

Internet website: <http://www.southwestmeat.org>

Edited by Phyllis Zimmerman

SMA Elects New Officers and Directors

During annual business meetings last Friday, the Southwest Meat Association elected new officers for fiscal year 2006-07. Burley Smith of Lone Star Beef Processors stepped down as Chairman of the Board, and David Cone of Chappell Hill Sausage acceded to that seat. Glen Kusak of Yoakum Packing Company moved up to the position of President, and Bobby Yarborough will serve as President-elect. Jim Ondrusek of Columbia Packing Company was installed as the new Secretary-Treasurer. Two regular members were appointed to the Board of Directors for three year terms: Jonathan Pace of Smokey Denmark Sausage and Nick Nickelson of Standard Meat Cargill. SMA sincerely thanks John Southerland of Pilgrim's Pride Corporation, whose term expired this year, for his many years of dedicated service on the Board of Directors. Boddie Goodman of Bunzl Distribution USA stepped down as Chairman of the Associate Member Board, and is succeeded by Dickie Mayer of Southwest Saw Corporation. Cecelia Railey of Jim Henry Enterprises is the new President, Darlene Childs of Unix, Inc. is now Vice-President, and Gary Nace of Birko Corporation serves as Treasurer. Associate members elected Rick Kimbrell of DCS Sanitation Management as their new Secretary. SMA gratefully thanks Burley Smith and Boddie Goodman for the years of valued service and outstanding leadership they have provided to our organization!

50th Annual Convention Tops Record for Attendance

Attendees agreed that the 50th Annual Convention and Suppliers' Showcase at the Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort & Spa in San Antonio last week was our biggest and best yet! Once again, the resort staff shined with unequalled service and we oversold our room block every night! At the General Sessions, members learned of the latest developments in pathogen control and testing, USDA regulatory policies, and meat industry trends as well as information on energy, personnel, and insurance matters. The competition for the "Best of the Worst" Award was fierce with 14 varieties running, but Morrilton Packing Company took home the top honor for their "Itty Bitty Sausage Links." Edward Ruff accepted the award from event sponsors Mike Reagan of Dewied International and Brian Sirridge of Handtmann, Inc. At the Bob Ondrusek Memorial Golf Tournament, sponsored by Birko Corporation, 26 teams competed in the four-man scramble. The winners were Jeremy Lightfoot, Marv Domke, David Englutt, and Neil Dudley. Our Friday luncheon speaker, Sgt. Matt Eversmann, touched everyone with his moving story of courage, duty, and honor on the battlefield. Then, the Suppliers' Showcase was our biggest ever, featuring 70 exhibitors demonstrating the latest in industry equipment, supplies and services. At the Suppliers Dinner Party, Jim Ondrusek presented five students with Bob Ondrusek Memorial Scholarships: Leslie Garcia and Eric Harwell of Tarleton State University, and Wade Fisher, Jessica Igo, and Denise Phillips of Texas A&M University. The event culminated with the President's Dinner and Dance, where many of our past presidents were recognized and presented with Heritage Crystal. Former Association Executive Marty Holmes offered the champagne toast to SMA's 50th Anniversary and couples danced to the Texas Swing music of the Tailor Made Band. SMA thanks all attendees, sponsors, and speakers who made this year's convention such a huge success! We also appreciate the attendance of all the Angelo State, Texas A&M, Texas Tech and Tarleton State University graduate students at this year's event, many who helped at the auction. Very special thanks go to Aggies Keri Bagley, Ashley Haneklaus, John David Nicholson and Robby Smith, who expertly managed hospitality and our registration desk! If you were unable to attend, please make plans to join us next year at our 51st Annual Convention at the new Hyatt Regency Lost Pines in Bastrop, Texas near Austin!

S O U T H W E S T M E A T A S S O C I A T I O N

4103 SOUTH TEXAS AVENUE, SUITE 101 • BRYAN, TX 77802 • (979) 846-9011 • FAX (979) 846-8198

FSIS Issues Notice on Retail *E.coli* Sampling

Last Friday, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) issued Notice 43-06, Retail *Escherichia Coli* (*E. Coli*) O157:H7 Sampling. The Notice provides clarification as to when Investigators from the Office of Program Evaluation, Enforcement, and Review (OPEER) should and should not collect ground beef samples at retail facilities. The Notice is available at: www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_and_policies/Notice_43-06/index.asp. According to the Directive, investigators should collect samples during a retail review when any one of the following occur: the retail facility does not maintain records of the federal or state establishment numbers of its suppliers; the retail facility has no grinding records; the retail facility grinds whole muscles; the retail facility has grinding records that show the potential for cross contamination (e.g., store mixes irradiated and un-irradiated beef); the records are unclear as to whether only in-house trim is used; or the records are unclear as to whether meat cuts for ground beef are used before their sell-by-date; or the retail facility is grinding or holding the product under insanitary conditions. Investigators should not take raw ground beef samples when: the product is case ready; the product is repackaged product (i.e., product that the retail facility does not grind and only portions such product in retail trays); the retail facility only regrinds product previously ground at official establishments and does not conduct any practices that would lead to cross-contamination; the firm does not produce ground beef products; and the product is accompanied by documentation to the retail store that the product is "specially handled beef manufacturing trimmings," and that the retail facility should control the product to prevent contamination. "Specially handled beef manufacturing trimmings" are "subprimals that have undergone an antimicrobial treatment for *E. coli* O157:H7, are trimmed to meet specific lean-to-fat ratios, are cut into slices, are sampled for *E. coli* O157:H7 through the establishment's verification testing program, and are sealed in bags for direct sale to a retail facility."

USDA Scales Back BSE Testing

The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is scaling back its testing program for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) to approximately one-tenth of what it has been since the discovery of the first U.S. case in December 2003. Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns said there is little justification for the current level, which is about 1,000 tests per day. The ongoing BSE surveillance program will sample approximately 40,000 animals each year, about 110 tests per day. "It's time that our surveillance efforts reflect what we now know is a very, very low level of BSE in the United States," Johanns said. Testing will be scaled back around late August, but he added that the reduced surveillance remains significantly higher than what is called for by the World Organization for Animal Health. Johanns said that he hopes the reduction will not affect the effort to reopen trade with Japan, which has pushed for the current level, or a higher level, of testing. Japan was a huge importer of U.S. beef before the first American case of BSE. Johanns said Japan should "recognize that what we've done here exceeds all the international standards, and the markets should be open to our beef." He also emphasized that testing has nothing to do with the safety of U.S. beef for

consumers here and abroad. From a food safety standpoint, the real key is the removal at slaughter of specified risk materials. "Those who are trying to convince their consumers that universal testing or 100% testing somehow solves the problem really are misleading you," he said. On an annual basis, the current level of 1,000 tests a day represents about 1% of the 35 million cattle slaughtered last year in the United States. In April, Johanns released a department analysis of testing data, saying the prevalence of mad cow disease "is extraordinarily low." There are probably four to seven undetected cases of the disease in the U.S., according to the analysis. A panel of independent scientists has agreed with the department's analysis.

YOUR SMA INSURANCE PARTNER



Independent Insurance Group

Specializing in the insurance needs
of the meat and food industries

www.indinsgrp.com

- General Liability
- Property
- Product Liability
- Equipment Breakdown
- Workers' Compensation
- Non-Subscription
- Fleet Auto
- Employee Benefits
- 24/7 Online Customer Service

For information on how our programs can help you, please contact
MaryEllen Wilmot, Director of New Business Development
(972) 850-2800 • Toll Free (888)258-1938
Email: maryellenw@indinsgrp.com

3010 LBJ Freeway, Suite 920 Dallas, TX 75234-2750

SMA Convention Portraits Are Available!

If you had your portrait made by Professional Images Photography Saturday evening during the President's Dinner & Dance, the images are now available for viewing and ordering on their website at: <http://www.photorelect.com/scripts/prsm.dll?eventthumbs?event=02Z50041>. You can also go to www.proimagesphoto.com and click on the orange "Find My Photos" button, then look for Southwest Meat Association on their list. If you need ordering assistance or do not have Internet access, please call 888-271-3446.

Briefly . . .

Japan Moves to Resume U.S. Beef Imports: Japan is expected to approve a partial resumption of imports of U.S. beef this coming week, according to news reports. The government plans to officially approve the resumption on Thursday, the national Yomiuri newspaper said, but an Agriculture Ministry official denied that a date had been set. Japanese inspectors returned home Sunday from a month of monitoring 35 U.S. meat processing plants - a condition Japan requested in June when it agreed in principle to resume imports. The team will compile a report based on its inspections, and the government will approve facilities that have prepared adequately. Any facility with problems will be asked to make improvements and be re-evaluated. Agriculture Minister Shoichi Nakagawa told reporters on Friday that a scaling back of the U.S. Agriculture Department's mad cow testing program "will not directly affect" the government's decision on the resumption of beef imports, although he urged Washington to maintain the higher level of surveillance. On Friday, USDA officials held a meeting with Japanese inspectors in Omaha, Nebraska, to answer any final questions. "They have a lot of very detailed questions; we are responding to those and making proposals," said Chuck Lambert, deputy undersecretary for marketing and regulatory programs. "There have not been any issues we feel are insurmountable," Lambert said.

Horse Slaughter Ban Hearings Begin This Week: The American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act (HR 503), a bill which would eliminate the humane slaughter and processing of horses for reasons other than safety or public health, has been introduced by Congressman John Sweeney (R-NY). Under the guise of protecting horse welfare, the bill may do more to harm horses than it will to protect them. Slaughter plants provide humane euthanasia as dictated by the Humane Slaughter Act, and their processing is regulated by the USDA's FSIS. In addition, the transport of animals to processing facilities is regulated by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, as mandated by the Commercial Transportation of Equine for Slaughter provision in the 1996 Farm Bill. The elimination of this livestock management option could leave some owners of lame, old, or useless stock to neglect, abandon, or inhumanely destroy their animals. Proponents of the legislation seem to forget that horses are livestock and equine welfare management issues should be based on scientific facts and animal husbandry practices, not on emotion. We urge members to write to their representatives in Washington to protect livestock owner rights and defeat HR 503.

FSIS Issues Notice on Non-Routine Incident Data Collection Efforts: FSIS issued Notice 42-06, titled, Non-Routine Incident Data Collection Efforts. This notice announces that FSIS personnel will collect information about the operational status of official establishments, as well as facilities that handle FSIS-regulated products (e.g., warehouses), during a non-routine incident (e.g., a hurricane). FSIS field personnel may be notified to supply information as to whether official establishments or facilities are operational as a result of the non-routine incident. Notice 42-06 is available on FSIS' website at www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Notice_42-06/index.asp.

Welcome, New Member!

SMA is proud to introduce
our newest Affiliate member:

Carlson Restaurants Worldwide

4201 Marsh Lane • Carrollton, TX 75007
Phone: 972-662-5579 • Fax: 972-662-5633
Website: www.crww.com

Colista Yates, Director - Quality Assurance & Food Safety

*Carlson Restaurants Worldwide is the parent company of all
T.G.I Fridays Restaurants*

Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming SMA Events

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| Sept 12-14 | Developing and Implementing HACCP Plans for the Meat Industry - Texas A&M University, College Station, TX |
| Nov 3- Dec 1 | Beyond Basics: HACCP Plan Improvement Workshop - Texas A&M University, College Station, TX |
| Dec 12-14 | Developing and Implementing HACCP Plans for the Meat Industry - Texas A&M University, College Station, TX |
| Jan 9-11 | Processed Meats Clinic - Texas A&M University, College Station, TX |