

SMA InfoMeat

1957

November 13, 2006
Volume 28, Issue 6

50 Years of Excellence!

Email: sma@tca.net
Internet website: southwestmeat.org

2006

Edited by Phyllis Zimmerman

USDA Approves Instrument Grading Systems

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved two image-based instrument grading systems for the determination of beef carcass marbling scores for use in the evaluation of official USDA Quality Grades for Carcass Beef. The two instruments approved for use are the VBS2000, manufactured by E+V Technology of Oranienburg, Germany, and the Computer Vision System, manufactured by RMS Research Management Systems of Fort Collins, Colorado. A news release from USDA says, "both systems were found appropriate for objectively predicting marbling scores accurately and precisely for use in the evaluation of beef carcasses for quality grade, certification programs and carcass data information programs." The release also said, "Use of the systems as part of the official grading process is contingent upon users having a written plan approved by the Livestock and Seed Program to verify the instrument's ongoing, in-plant operational accuracy as outlined in Phase III of the approval procedures for yield grading and PRIME II requirements for instrument marbling evaluation." For additional information on the standards for the instrument grading of beef carcasses, visit www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/lis-st.htm.

APHIS Extends Comments on Proposed BSE Minimal Risk Rule

Last Thursday the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Agency (APHIS) published a notice in the *Federal Register* extending the comment period on the proposed rule published on August 9, 2006, "Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE); Minimal-Risk Regions, Identification of Ruminants and Processing and Importation of Commodities." The comment period is being extended to November 24, 2006. All comments received between the original comment closing date (October 10th) and that time will be considered. The proposed rule "would remove several restrictions regarding the identification of animals and the processing of ruminant materials from BSE minimal-risk regions, as well as BSE-based restrictions on gelatin derived from bovine hides." The notice extending the comment period is available at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/E6-19042.htm>. To read the proposed rule in its entirety, visit <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20061800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2006/E6-12944.htm>.

Register Today for 2007 Processed Meats Clinic

The 2007 Processed Meats Clinic, hosted by the Southwest Meat Association, TAMU's Meat Science Section, and Texas Cooperative Extension, is slated for January 9-11 at Texas A&M University. This three-day workshop will provide hands-on training and show-and-tell demonstrations in the areas of meat processing and product development. Through lecture and laboratory instruction, attendees will learn the properties and functional characteristics of raw (meat) and non-meat ingredients, the basics of processed meat product development, how to formulate and determine the costs of making processed meat products, and how to apply the principles of product development in making a processed meat product. The course is limited to 40 participants, so register early! Registration forms and a tentative agenda are available on the SMA website or by contacting our office. For more information, contact Dr. Wes Osburn at 979-845-3935.

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

Creekstone Farms Files Reply to USDA Documents

In its lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Creekstone Farms Premium Beef has answered USDA's court documents opposing the company's motion for summary judgment. Creekstone initiated the suit against USDA in March for refusing to allow the Arkansas City beef processor to voluntarily test all the cattle it slaughters for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE). USDA officials have told the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia that Creekstone's case is now moot, since Japan and Korea have re-opened their borders to restricted U.S. beef imports. Many countries banned imports of U.S. beef when BSE was discovered in the U. S. herd. The company is arguing that the USDA has misinterpreted and has exceeded the authority congress gave the agency nearly 100 years ago with the Virus, Serum, and Toxins Act (VSTA). That act was enacted to stop the sale of bogus hog cholera serums to Midwestern farmers. Creekstone's founder and former CEO, John Stewart, said, "The USDA is using the VSTA in a way Congress never intended – not to protect ranchers from unscrupulous suppliers of phony serum – but to prevent Creekstone Farms from conducting its business: meeting the worldwide demand for BSE-tested beef." Creekstone's filing also maintains that the company is seeking to test 100% of its beef for BSE to enhance its brand reputation and to make it possible to sell beef for higher prices in both domestic and foreign markets. The filing seeks to support a claim of serious economic harm both in the main document and in several amicus briefs filed in support of Creekstone's case. Testing all the cattle processed at the Arkansas City plant would cost Creekstone about \$6 million annually, but the company contends that regaining lost markets would more than pay for the additional cost. Prior to the Japanese ban, the company claims that sales to Japan accounted for about 30% of its production. Creekstone also submitted comments from recognized BSE experts, stating that more BSE testing could be valuable by providing more data on the presence or absence of BSE in the U.S. herd.

FSIS Updates Export Information on Website

The Export Information page on FSIS' website has recently been updated to provide new information to aide inspectors and exporters as they prepare product for export. A new featured item was created to store the Export Tip of the Week. The featured tip will change on a weekly basis as new export tips are published, and tips published since March will be featured under "Export Tip of the Week Archive." The "Establishing Eligibility" and "Certifying Meat and Poultry Products for Export" links have been replaced with a new link titled, "Export Certification Checklist." This link offers a combined, more streamlined version of the information found at the two previous links. A new link titled "Frequently Asked Questions" has also been added. The "USDA Trade Assistance" link now takes users directly to contacts at the Foreign Agricultural Services' overseas offices in order to save users valuable time when certifying or preparing product for export. For more information, visit FSIS' website at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp. To subscribe to the Export Library, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Requirements_EV_Countries/index.asp.

Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming SMA Events

November 30- December 1, 2006

Beyond Basics: HACCP Plan Improvement
Workshop - Texas A&M University,
College Station, TX

December 12-14, 2006

Developing and Implementing HACCP
Plans for the Meat Industry - Texas A&M
University, College Station, TX

January 9-11, 2007

Processed Meats Clinic - Texas A&M
University, College Station, TX

February 6-8, 2007

Developing and Implementing HACCP
Plans for the Meat Industry - Texas A&M
University, College Station, TX

30 YEARS OF DESIGNING & MANUFACTURING INNOVATIVE FOOD PROCESSING EQUIPMENT!



- Tenderize
- Chill/Freeze
- Press
- Slice
- Dice



Bruce Buchholtz
Regional Sales Manager
South Central Region
Tel: (540) 219-5758

Ross Industries, Inc.,
5321 Midland Road, Midland, VA 22728
www.rossindinc.com

Briefly . . .

FSIS to Co-Chair Symposium on Risk: FSIS will co-chair a symposium during the 2006 Society for Risk Analysis (SRA) annual meeting. The theme of the meeting is "Risk Analysis in a Dynamic World: Making a Difference." The symposium will focus on modeling the attribution of foodborne illness in the United States and adaptation of a model for attributing human Salmonellosis to consumption of meat, poultry and eggs in the United States. The SRA meeting will be held December 3 - 6, at the Renaissance Harborplace Hotel, 202 East Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21202. For more information about the symposium, visit <http://birenheide.com/sra/2006AM/program/singleession.php3?sessid=M3-E>.

Carpenter Announces Retirement from USDA: After nearly 37 years, Barry Carpenter recently announced his decision to retire from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In 1970, he left a job in the meat industry to join USDA's Livestock Division. After 18 years with the Meat Grading Branch, 2 years with the Dairy Program, and 17 years in the Livestock and Seed Program, Deputy Administrator's office, he has decided to move on and pursue other challenges. "Throughout my career with USDA, I have had the great fortune of working with fellow government employees and industry representatives that have shared my enthusiasm and appreciation for agriculture. This opportunity to be a part of the government team working with industry to help them thrive in an ever changing marketplace has provided me with continuous satisfaction and countless memories," Carpenter wrote. "I have often said that I have the "best job" in the Government. This heartfelt assessment has developed over the years as I have experienced the commitment and teamwork of my coworkers in the Livestock and Seed Program and the support, flexibility and respect afforded me by the leadership at USDA." SMA offers him our sincere best wishes in all his future endeavors!

Cargill Donates Thanksgiving Turkeys: Wichita, Kansas-based Cargill Meat Solutions Corporation has announced it will donate nearly 18,000 pounds of its premium Honeysuckle White turkeys to Ronald McDonald House Charities this Thanksgiving holiday season. The turkeys will be used to provide traditional Thanksgiving feasts to families of seriously ill children staying in nearly 160 Ronald McDonald Houses around the U.S. Ronald McDonald House Charities says more than 4,000 families will celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday at their facilities this year. RMHC President and CEO, Ken Barun, said in the news release, "Cargill's generosity means that all of the families staying at a Ronald McDonald House will have a chance to enjoy a traditional Thanksgiving turkey dinner this year."

Countries Team Up to Promote Lamb: Representatives of the lamb industry in Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. will meet in Denver this month to discuss plans for cooperative lamb meat promotion and research initiatives in the U.S. Since the early 1900s, per capita lamb consumption in the U.S. has been static or decreasing, while other protein sources, especially pork and chicken, have increased their market share. This "Tri-Lamb" initiative will focus on promoting nutritional aspects of lamb meat. Initiatives such as Tri-Lamb and the on-going "Australian Lamb – Fresh, Easy and Delicious" marketing program are focused on increasing U.S. lamb consumption.

Dan Mar Co. can help meet the need!

Keeper Professional.
FDA approved

Antimicrobial Agent



Our antimicrobial solution is controlling bacteria on more than 1 million pounds of red meat products daily!

Proper antimicrobial intervention can help the Red Meat and RTE Industries significantly reduce and control bacteria such as E coli 0157, Salmonella and Listeria by intergrating Keeper Professional into any of their processing pipelines—including mechanical tenderizing.

Inquire today! (888) 822-5767 danmarco1@msn.com www.danmarco.net

Does Your HACCP Plan Need An Update? Are You Ready for an FSIS Team Review?

Register now for "Beyond Basics: HACCP Plan Improvement Workshop for Raw and Cooked Product Operations,"

hosted by SMA, NMA, and the Texas A&M University Department of Animal Science, November 30 - December 1, 2006 at TAMU's Kleberg Center in College Station, Texas. This workshop will provide a review and evaluation of your company's HACCP plan, with hands-on help to improve it.

Registration information and course outline are available on the SMA web site or by contacting the SMA office.

Sign up today!