

Done at Washington, DC, on February 28, 1995.

Michael R. Taylor,

Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety.

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[Docket No. 95-009N]

Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems—Notice of Scientific/ Technical Conference and Request for Papers

AGENCY: Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) will hold a scientific/technical conference, "New Technology to Improve Food Safety," on April 12-13, 1995, at the Holiday Inn O'Hare Airport, Rosemont, Illinois. The purpose of the conference is to discuss ways of developing and subsequently introducing new technologies to improve food safety.

ADDRESSES: Papers should be sent to: Dr. Pat Basu, Director, Technology Transfer and Coordination Staff, Science and Technology, FSIS, USDA, Room 302 Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20250.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Pat Basu at (202) 720-8623.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On February 3, 1995, FSIS published a proposed rule "Pathogen Reduction; Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems" (60 FR 6774). In that document, the Agency proposed a number of regulatory changes applicable to Federal- and State-inspected meat and poultry establishments. The proposed changes were designed to reduce the occurrence and numbers of pathogenic microorganisms in meat and poultry products, thereby reducing the incidence of foodborne illness associated with the consumption of these products.

In the proposed rule, FSIS stated its intent to review its current policies and procedures governing review and approval of in-plant technologies that improve the safety of meat and poultry products, and to convene a public meeting to gain information on ways the Agency might improve its role in fostering and overseeing the implementation of such technologies. FSIS believes that the development and proper use of technology can contribute significantly to improving the safety of the food supply. FSIS recognizes that

members of the regulated industry have complained that some of the Agency's control mechanisms stifle innovation, potentially impeding progress that could improve food safety. The Agency also recognizes consumer groups' concern that technologies be proven effective and safe before use, and that the scientific processes used by FSIS to evaluate technologies be open to public scrutiny and participation. To discuss these issues, FSIS is hosting a scientific/technical conference.

The first conference, "New Technology to Improve Food Safety" will be held on April 12-13, 1995, at the Holiday Inn O'Hare Airport, 5440 North River Road, Rosemont, IL 60018, (708) 671-6350. The conference will begin each day at 8:30 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. on April 12th; at noon on April 13th.

Conference Agenda

The conference will consist of three sessions as follows:

Session I: "The Role of Innovation in Enhancing the Safety of Meat and Poultry Products"

Speakers will give examples of new food safety technologies that have been introduced.

Session II: "Models for Government Facilitation of Technology Development and Transfer"

U.S. Government representatives and a representative from a foreign country will discuss various government models used in the United States and abroad to encourage the development and implementation of new technologies.

Session III: "New Technologies for Reducing Pathogens, Especially *Escherichia coli* O157:H7"

Speakers will address promising new technologies developed to reduce food pathogens.

Thomas J. Billy, Associate Administrator, FSIS will moderate and be joined by a panel consisting of: Patricia Stolfa, Associate Deputy Administrator for Science and Technology, FSIS; Gene Lyons, Research Leader, Richard Russell Research Center, Agricultural Research Service; a consumer representative; and an industry representative.

At each session, invited speakers from FSIS, other government agencies, industry, and academia groups will give presentations relevant to that session's topic. At Sessions I and III, selected participants that have sent papers to FSIS (see below for details of paper submission) will give a 5 minute presentation. Finally, the panel will have an opportunity to ask the presenters questions.

Submission of Papers

For Sessions I and III, interested persons may submit a paper to FSIS. For Session I, FSIS solicits papers detailing experiences and examples of innovative technologies that have improved food safety. For Session III, FSIS solicits papers presenting information on new technologies for reducing pathogens, especially *Escherichia coli* O157:H7. Papers should present information pertaining to effectiveness and cost of the technology, employee safety, and consumer acceptance of the technology. Session II consists of presentations from representatives from U.S. government agencies and a representative from a foreign country, and papers will not be presented.

Selected persons submitting papers will be invited to give a 5 minute presentation summarizing their paper. If the same subject is covered in more than one paper, FSIS will have the authors combine their presentation for a single 5 minute presentation or select the first paper submitted on the issue and have that author give a presentation.

All papers must be received by March 31, 1995, to be considered for the conference. Please indicate if the paper is for Session I or Session III. Two copies of each paper should be submitted (See ADDRESSES), along with hard copies of any slides to be used in the presentation.

Availability of Information

After the conference, the panel will prepare a report of the proceedings addressing the issues presented. This report will include information on how FSIS can assist in the development and introduction of new technologies to improve food safety. Any reports by the panel, transcripts of the conference, and copies of all the papers received will be available in the FSIS Docket Clerk's Office, Room 3171, South Agriculture Building, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.

Attendance and Hotel Reservations

Please call Ms. Betsy Kogan at (202) 205-0699 if you plan to attend the conference. Additionally, FSIS has reserved a block of rooms at the hotel for \$85 per night. Reservations may be made by contacting the hotel at (708) 671-6350.

Done at Washington, DC, on March 6, 1995.

Michael R. Taylor,

Acting Under Secretary for Food Safety.

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