

Two Surveys

Assessing the Information and
Training Needs of Personnel in
Small and Very Small Plants

The Project

- USDA/CSREES Award No. 2006-51110-03725
- Additional funds from FSIS to support this meeting with a national scope

Project Objectives

Research Goal: To identify training, education and information needs of small and very small meat and poultry plant operators.

Objectives

- **Conduct a survey of the Northeast Meat and Poultry industry to assess:**
 - The knowledge of industry personnel of HACCP principles including hazard analysis, verification and validation procedures, and pathogen testing programs;
 - Where industry personnel are getting educational information;
 - Training programs available and used by NE industry;
 - The need for greater access to training; and
 - The feasibility/acceptability of on-line or correspondence courses as a way to meet the needs of the industry.

Project Objectives

- Conduct a survey of those providing training/advice to small and very small meat and poultry operations including:
 - FSIS Small Plant contacts and coordinators
 - FSIS regional staff
 - University and Cooperative Extension personnel providing these programs and services and those doing research regarding training
 - Industry associations and commodity groups
 - International HACCP Alliance

The survey will be designed to elicit the following information:

- What training is being done
 - Who is doing the training
 - What format is being used (lecture, online, etc.)
 - What materials are being used (if possible, get copy)
 - Any available documentation regarding impact or effectiveness of training?
- Organize and conduct a workshop to review, assess and make recommendations for development of a training and information system for small and very small meat and poultry operations.

Project Objectives

■ Extension Objectives

- Develop a coordinated NE training and information plan
- Develop a set of training materials to include:
 - Core curriculum (using International HACCP Alliance guidelines)
 - Updated HACCP models
 - Course modules addressing specific topics such as *Listeria*, *E. coli* O157:H7, allergens, sanitation, etc.

Project Objectives

- Extension Objectives, cont.
 - Establish a Northeast network/coordinating group to facilitate provision of HACCP/Food Safety/Sanitation training and information to the meat and poultry industry
 - Develop a web site for communication with NE regional industry
 - Develop and offer a train-the-trainer course to encourage expansion of course options for the region

Survey #1

- The survey of those providing training was drafted, reviewed by the project committee and emailed using Zoomerang to 232 persons including USDA Small and Very Small HACCP contacts and coordinators in each state, consultants, and Extension personnel.

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- The email survey has been completed. In March 2007, 232 persons involved in training, education and providing information to small and very small meat and poultry plants were sent the survey, generated by Zoomerang, an email survey provider. The survey was resent to non-respondents in April. A total of 75 persons responded to the email. The survey was sent out by US mail to those who still did not respond. This generated 10 more responses for a total response of 85, 35% of the total sent.

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- Results indicated: 55% of those who responded were FSIS small plant coordinators and/or contacts for their state; 87% of responders consider themselves a source for HACCP food safety training and/or information for small and very small plants; and 64% provide basic HACCP meat and poultry training.

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- While most (87%) provide the basic course, fewer provide training specifically regarding sanitation (59%); pathogen reduction programs such as e. coli and listeria (59%); process validation (35%); biosecurity and food defense (17%); and trace-back (9%) or recall procedures (17%).

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- 41% provide basic HACCP workshops 2-4 times per year and 24% once per year, while 26% respond as requested by industry. Most charge \$101-300 for workshops. It is interesting that 74% have their basic courses approved by the International HACCP Alliance and 89% develop their own teaching materials.

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- When asked which resources they would find to be a useful addition to their training program, 74% stated resources for process validation information; 63% would like updated HACCP models; and 57% would like more resources for pathogen detection and control and sample record-keeping forms.

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- Information and services other than training includes answering questions and making referrals (93%); web sites (35%); consulting services for HACCP plan development and plan implementation (46%) and consulting services for process validation (40%). 81% are employed by a university/college or Cooperative Extension.