

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, August 31, 1997

The recall has caused widespread concern among beef producers and consumers. A poll of 501 adults conducted for Newsweek magazine earlier this month as the story was getting wide attention found that 41 percent of those polled were less likely to purchase hamburger at grocery stores; 54 percent were less likely to buy hamburgers at fast-food restaurants. The poll's margin of error was plus or minus 5 percentage points.

Cattle ranchers worry the contamination scare could sour the public on beef, already struggling to hold its market share against poultry and pork.

"The cattle industry is worried about food safety," said Jim Clower of the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association. "But with the process the way we have it, it's very difficult to make it 100 percent safe."

John Marcy agrees. Marcy is an extension food scientist at the University of Arkansas' Center of Excellence for Poultry Science and a member of the federally funded Food Safety Consortium, which Bumpers helped establish. Marcy testified before Congress on the dangers of E. coli 0157:H7 in 1994.

Marcy said the federal government's new system of food-safety controls, known as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, will have a minimal effect on reducing food-borne illness. The program will require more extensive testing and better record-keeping on monitoring bacteria in meat and other foods. But contamination can occur at all stages of food production, from farm to table, Marcy said.

"There's no good way to keep this stuff out," he said. "Food safety is not a problem with a solution. Cooking does kill it. That applies to everything."

The preventive measures in the new food-safety system are being phased in at food-processing plants. However, the new system does not require specific testing for E. coli 0157:H7.

"It does require testing for generic E. coli, which is a broad indicator of contamination," Lombardi said. "But it's just an indicator of the general bacteria levels in their product, whether that's getting better or worse."

Community leaders in Columbus stood behind Hudson.

Community Support

Columbus Mayor Gary Giebelhaus said Burger King, the nation's second-largest fast-food chain, should have stood by Hudson Foods. The plant produced about 3 million pounds of beef weekly and accounted for \$ 91 million in sales in fiscal 1996. Burger King bought more than half the plant's beef.

"It's my opinion that Burger King and their parent company does not share the Midwest mentality of helping others in their time of need," Giebelhaus said.

However, Giebelhaus and others remained optimistic about the plant's future. Hudson had promised to paying plant employees until the USDA's concerns were cleared.

Dwayne Smith, co-chairman of the Columbus Economic Council, said Columbus residents believed the problems at Hudson weren't as big as the news media and

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the USDA purported them to be.

"We understand that the protection of the American consumer is first and foremost in all of our minds, but we do question whether this situation with Hudson has gone beyond the concern of the public," Smith said.

Columbus has more than 80 manufacturing companies, about 6,000 manufacturing jobs and about a 2 percent unemployment rate.

"If Hudson pulls out, it would have an impact on the community, but it would not be a major setback," Smith said before the plant was sold.

The Hudson plant was the community's eighth-largest employer. Smith has been in the plant several times and said the company took plenty of precautions when it came to food safety.

"I think they've taken every precaution imaginable to keep it as clean as possible," Smith said.

Hudson, which is expected to generate \$ 1.7 billion in 1997 sales, is primarily a poultry company and is the fifth-largest poultry processor in the country, slaughtering about 8 million chickens a week. Beef accounted for about 6 percent of its total sales.

PHIC: Photo

James T. "Red" Hudson

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: September 10, 1997

LEVEL 1 - 6 OF 19 STORIES

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Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

September 8, 1997 Monday Final

SECTION: News Pg. 5

LENGTH: 608 words

HEADLINE: New meat rules seem a long shot
But hamburger fiasco could propel expanded powers for inspectors

BYLINE: JONATHAN WEISMAN

SOURCE: Congressional Quarterly

DATELINE: Washington

BODY:

Even before President Clinton's proposal to strengthen the power of federal meat inspectors is formally introduced, it appears to be heading the same way on Capitol Hill as its predecessors over the past decade: nowhere.

Despite last month's recall of 25 million pounds of hamburger patties by the Hudson Foods Co. of Arkansas, resistance runs deep in the Republican-controlled Congress to giving the government still more power to make regulations.

"We do have a pretty good system out there," said Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-Neb). "Anytime anybody in the federal government says, 'I need more power,' I say, 'Wait a minute. I want to take a good look.'"

Federal meat inspection resembles the teetering Russian military: armed with devastating weaponry but ill-equipped to handle the subtleties of the modern crisis.

The Department of Agriculture's 7,400 inspectors are a constant presence at the nation's 6,200 slaughterhouses, but critics say they cannot keep up with the increasingly global nature of the food industry.

The Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, which has jurisdiction over foods other than meat and poultry, is in far worse shape. Its 700 investigators must oversee some 53,000 factories, meaning that a plant may go a decade between inspections.

The enforcement tools at the agencies' disposal are powerful but blunt. If a meat processing plant refuses to voluntarily recall tainted beef, the federal government has only one real weapon in its arsenal: withdrawing its inspectors. Without federal inspection, a plant's meat must be stamped "adulterated" and cannot be sold across state lines. Such a move would be tantamount to shutting down the plant. It would be as if the Department of Transportation discovered a faulty door lock and had no recourse but to shut down a whole auto plant.

The Hudson incident nearly reached crisis stage when the company demurred on recalling as much meat as the USDA was demanding. It took three weeks before the company finally agreed to the massive recall ordered Aug. 21.

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel September 9, 1997

The meat industry and farm-state lawmakers say the case proves that federal inspectors have all the power they need. The administration feels it doesn't.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman declared: "We don't have much time for a protracted debate over how much product should be recalled. We don't have time for a snail's-pace procedure to stop a plant's production until they clean up their act."

In the coming weeks, the Clinton administration will formally introduce legislation designed to give federal food inspectors new options that are less drastic on paper but more usable in practice.

Under the proposals, the government would be given new mandatory recall powers and new civil monetary penalties to impose on companies that violate meat and poultry laws. Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-Vt.) has promised to sponsor the measure.

The American Meat Institute, the National Food Processors Association and the Grocery Manufacturers of America have all condemned the Glickman plan as unnecessary, costly and counterproductive.

"Instead of promoting food fear, the government should . . . build food confidence by enforcing the existing rules," wrote Stephen Ziller of the Grocery Manufacturers of America.

One thing going for advocates of a legislative overhaul is the news. The Hudson hamburger recall is just the latest in a nightmarish string of bad press, from tainted raspberries to bad cider.

Leahy plans to call a summit in the coming weeks among the administration, farm-state lawmakers and the food industry to see whether a compromise can be reached.

LOAD-DATE: September 9, 1997

LEVEL 1 - 3 OF 19 STORIES

Copyright 1997 The Omaha World-Herald Company
Omaha World-Herald

September 9, 1997, Tuesday SUNRISE EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 6

LENGTH: 119 words

HEADLINE: Senate Panel Sets Food-Safety Hearing

SOURCE: WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

DATELINE: Washington

BODY:

A Senate hearing has been set for Oct. 7 to examine food-safety problems and proposed legislation in light of the recent recall of 25 million pounds of beef from a Nebraska plant, U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., announced Monday.

The hearing, before the Senate Agriculture Committee, which Lugar leads, will be the first congressional look at the issue since an outbreak of E. coli bacteria infections in early August led to the recall of hamburger patties from Hudson Foods' plant in Columbus.

Lugar said the hearing also would consider legislation proposed by Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman.

Glickman's proposal would give agriculture secretaries new power to order meat recalls.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: September 9, 1997

LEVEL 1 - 19 OF 22 STORIES

Copyright 1997 Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

August 31, 1997, Sunday

SECTION: BUSINESS; Pg. 4NWBM

LENGTH: 822 words

HEADLINE: Hudson fades the heat, with help from friends

BYLINE: Susan Scantlin, ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

BODY:

Hudson's frozen hamburger discs have become a long-playing record of business blues for the Rogers-based company. Yet, tucked within the bad news bombardment, a quiet chorus of support continues to sound from ground zero of the burger brouhaha.

Flame-broiled by the consumer connection to Hudson Foods' E. coli cloud, Burger King officials took the offensive, launching a campaign to purge the perception of tainted beef between their "Bun Halves" logo.

In the heels of the announcement to permanently sever Hudson as a beef supplier, full-page newspaper ads -- signed by Burger King President Paul Clayton -- declared the hamburger chain clear of ground beef from the Columbus, Neb., plant.

"... Although there was absolutely no indication that any of the beef Hudson Foods supplied to us was unsafe, we issued the recall anyway, because the trust and confidence you have in us every time you visit one of our restaurants is more important than any loss of business," reads the advertisement.

In the heart of the Midwest, some folks were declaring Burger King should have had a heart.

Columbus Mayor Gary Giebelhaus said last week Burger King should have stood by Hudson Foods. "Their decision, I'm sure, was a great disappointment to the Hudson employees and their families. It's my opinion that Burger King and their parent company does not share the Midwest mentality of helping others in their time of need."

Hudson has been a corporate neighbor in Columbus -- a city of just under 20,000 residents -- for only two years. But city leaders and company employees have, so far, stood by the besieged company, offering vocal support "in their time of need."

According to reports from the Columbus (Neb.) Telegram, the city competed against other Midwest towns for the Hudson beef processing plant in 1994. Columbus was chosen "because 25 percent of all of the beef sold in the United States comes from within a 100-mile radius of Columbus."

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While Hudson was the eighth-largest employer in Columbus, with 230 workers, the town is far from job-needy.

Located in Platte County, Columbus' unemployment rate rivals that of Northwest Arkansas -- 2.5 percent -- barely topping the state unemployment rate of 2.4 percent.

Hudson has continued to pay its Columbus work force during the plant shutdown, while the U.S. Department of Agriculture searches for the E. coli source among the plant's outside suppliers. Earlier in the week Mayor Giebelhaus was facing the reality the plant may not reopen.

Following the plant shutdown Giebelhaus told the Columbus Telegram, "If that would happen, Columbus has built a strong industrial-agriculture base. Even though we'll do anything to help keep this company, one broken link won't break this chain. But, I have every confidence this community will rally around Hudson."

Hudson officials indicated the company was looking to cut its losses and pull out of the red-meat processing business if the lost Burger King business wasn't replaced. Meanwhile, Wal-Mart and Boston Chicken Inc. were standing by the company until the USDA clears the plant and the processing chain.

Wednesday it was announced the plant had been sold to IBP Inc. of Dakota City, Neb., and company would offer jobs to the former Hudson workers.

Now clear of the Columbus plant, clearing the family name is high on Hudson's list. Out of the blue, or perhaps out from under the company's dark cloud, emerges one of the best-known names in Arkansas' inner political circle, Skip Rutherford, as a Hudson company spokesman.

Rutherford, a personal friend of President Bill Clinton, is executive vice president of the Little Rock public relations firm Cranford Johnson Robinson Woods. Currently, Rutherford is serving as the president's representative in choosing a site and fund-raising for the presidential library to be built at a yet-unnamed central Arkansas location.

Whether Rutherford, more than your average Arkansas spin doctor, pursued his new role or was pursued by the company is an interesting question. As the food safety debate shifts from Columbus to Capitol Hill, those who stand beside you in your time of need become critically important allies.

Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman is expected to submit details of meat-safety bill to Congress this week. If earlier requests are revived Glickman's proposal, processors could face civil penalties of more than 100,000 a day for food safety violations.

It appears unlikely, even in the face of the recent E. coli scare, Glickman's efforts will be any more successful than past attempts for regulatory and punitive power to the USDA. Meanwhile, the debate to probe the pink meat in the USDA's inspection process. Just how breakdowns are should be of public concern as well.

LEVEL 1 - 18 OF 22 STORIES

Copyright 1997 Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

August 31, 1997, Sunday

SECTION: BUSINESS; Pg. 16NWBM

LENGTH: 2310 words

HEADLINE: Hudson: After the recall USDA seeking more power in wake of buger crisis

BYLINE: Russell Ray

BODY:

"There certainly was not any need, in this instance, for additional authority," U.S. Rep. Asa Hutchinson, R.-Ark., said last week.

The concern grew as the recall of beef produced by Hudson Foods Inc. of Rogers grew from 20,000 pounds to 25 million pounds -- the largest meat recall in U.S. history. As of last week, the USDA was still investigating how the beef became tainted with a potentially fatal bacteria known as Escherichia coli 0157:H7.

The chain of events that prompted the massive recall began in July when 22-year-old Lee Harding of Pueblo, Colo., began showing early symptoms of food poisoning one day after eating two hamburger patties produced by Hudson's only beef-processing plant, located in Columbus, Neb.

A local hospital confirmed the man had been infected by the harmful strain of E. coli and reported it to the Pueblo city-county health department. The man told health officials that the hamburgers he ate at a barbecue the day before may have been undercooked, said Heather Maio, director of environmental health for the local health department. County health officials then collected the leftover Hudson hamburger patties from Harding's freezer and turned them over to the USDA for testing. The test results showed that the burgers contained the harmful E. coli microbe and proved to be the clue that helped health officials link several illnesses in Colorado to E. coli-tainted beef produced by Hudson.

As of last week, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta had confirmed that 16 people in Colorado had become ill after eating Hudson-produced hamburger patties. All 16 cases were linked to E. coli food poisoning. The E. coli bacteria found in each case were genetically identical, said Tom Skinner, a CDC spokesman.

No deaths have been linked to Hudson beef products, Skinner said.

Meanwhile, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman is using the widely publicized recall to make headway on legislation that would give him the power to recall and impose civil penalties for food-safety violations.

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At an Aug. 21 press conference, Glickman promised to draft legislation for Congress to consider when it reconvenes this week. Glickman announced Hudson's landmark recall and plant shutdown at the same press conference. Hudson issued the massive recall and closed the plant at the USDA's request.

"I agree wholeheartedly with the consumer groups who feel that one of the biggest loopholes out there is the fact that I do not have the authority to order a recall," Glickman said. "I think that most folks would be shocked to know that industry -- and not federal food safety experts -- ultimately make the decision as to whether or not food is recalled when the public's safety is compromised."

Still, some federal lawmakers are not convinced that Glickman and his agency need more power.

"I do not believe he has made his case yet for additional authority," Hutchinson said. "I think the agency has failed to recognize the extraordinary cooperation of Hudson Foods."

The Rogers-based company has fully cooperated with the USDA in its investigation and has demonstrated that it has the public's best interest at heart, Hutchinson said.

Glickman could have minimized the damage to Hudson Foods by talking about the company's cooperation, Hutchinson said. Glickman has instead perpetuated public fear by using "rather harsh terms" when speaking publicly about the federal investigation into the company, he said. Glickman called his investigators a "SWAT" team and said more stringent standards for the plant were "non-negotiable."

Two days after Glickman announced the recall, Burger King, Hudson's biggest beef customer, announced that it had forever stopped buying beef from Hudson.

Hudson on Friday sold the Nebraska plant, which employs 230 people and accounted for \$ 91 million in sales in fiscal 1996, to IBP (formerly Iowa Beef Producers) of Dakota City, Neb. No purchase price was disclosed.

Glickman already has the power to withdraw federal inspectors from a plant, which in effect would shut down any food-processing facility. That authority gives the agency tremendous leverage in getting a company to voluntarily issue a recall.

"Nobody is going to argue with the secretary in a situation like this because he can shut the plant down by simply taking his inspectors out," said U.S. Sen. Dale Bumpers, D-Ark. "You can't ship a product that does not have an official seal of the U.S. Department of Agriculture on it. All he has to do is just remove his inspectors, and you're effectively shut down anyway."

Bumpers said he would not likely support a proposal that would give Glickman arbitrary authority to levy civil fines.

"I'm not sure I'm willing to turn the authority to levy civil fines over to one person," Bumpers said. "That's such a judgmental thing. Somebody could levy a fine that could bankrupt a company, and the fine might turn out to be totally unjustified."

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However, Bumpers said he would consider supporting a bill that would give Glickman authority to make recalls and close plants when dealing with companies that have been cited for repeated violations of federal food-safety rules.

"I might give him some authority just in case somebody was very reluctant to cooperate," Bumpers said. "I would not be disposed at this time to grant him carte blanche, arbitrary authority to levy fines."

Since Hudson's initial recall of 20,000 pounds, Bumpers said he has twice spoken with Hudson founder and Chairman James T. "Red" Hudson, whom he has known for many years.

"They couldn't be more upset," Bumpers said. "When [the USDA] said 25 million pounds, that didn't go down too well, but they didn't argue about it."

Agriculture officials are drafting the proposed legislation and plan to have it ready to present to Congress when it reconvenes after Labor Day. The USDA declined to release details of the proposal last week.

The Clinton administration has twice tried to get Congress to give Glickman the authority to order recalls and levy civil fines. Both times, once in 1994 and again in 1995, the proposals were defeated in Congress. The proposals called for recall authority and civil penalties of up to \$ 100,000 a day for food-safety violations.

"I'm hopeful that the third time's the charm," Glickman said at his Aug. 21 press conference. "I think the public is much more focused on the problem, and there's really no question that the American people want government doing everything it can to ensure the food they put on their table is safe."

Both Hudson and the USDA believe the beef was contaminated before it entered the plant, perhaps at a slaughterhouse owned by one of Hudson's beef suppliers. E. coli 0157:H7 is found in the intestines of cattle and can infect beef when the cow is disemboweled in the slaughterhouse. Hudson didn't slaughter cows at its Nebraska plant. The beef it processed came from a handful of USDA-inspected plants.

USDA spokesman Steve Lombardi said the agency is two to three weeks away from making any conclusions from its investigation.

Although investigators are looking at Hudson's six beef suppliers, which neither the agency nor Hudson will name, they also are looking into record-keeping practices at the plant and whether the company tried to hide the full scope of the problem.

"It was just very difficult to get answers to simple questions, like what went on what days," Lombardi said.

Was Hudson trying to cover up something? "That is one of the questions they're asking in the investigation," Lombardi said. "They are looking into whether Hudson was as forthcoming as they could have. But that hasn't been determined yet."

USDA officials have said that they were disturbed by a practice at the plant of mixing day-old meat from one day's production with meat in the next day's

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duction. The practice is common in the beef industry and is known as "work."

"The practice in and of itself isn't a food safety issue," said Janet Riley, director of public affairs for the American Meat Institute. "It is harder to isolate a problem when a problem does occur."

Tests showed that beef produced at the plant on June 5 was contaminated with the dangerous strain of E. coli. Investigators later learned that meat processed on June 6 included leftover meat from June 5.

A lack of record-keeping prevented investigators from determining further which beef supplies were reworked into other days' production, Lombardi said. The information, he said, would have helped in limiting the recall. As a result, the USDA asked the company to recall all meat ever produced at the Columbus plant, which opened in February 1995.

The initial recall of 20,000 pounds was issued Aug. 12. By Aug. 21, it had ballooned to 25 million pounds.

At an Aug. 19 press conference, Red Hudson denied reports suggesting his company tried to mislead federal investigators in determining the size of the recall.

"I'm sure if that was the case, the USDA would be saying it already," Hudson told reporters.

Hudson said the volume of the initial recall was determined incorrectly because the company had little time to review all of its records. Company officials spent most of their time looking up code numbers on the product that needed to be recalled.

"This is what the public needed to know," Hudson said. "They didn't really care whether we had one pound or 1 million pounds. They needed to know what they might be looking for."

In the three months before the initial recall, the plant conducted 57 bacteria-detecting tests on samples of meat in the plant. None of them were positive for E. coli 0157:H7.

The recall has caused widespread concern among beef producers and consumers. A poll of 501 adults conducted for Newsweek magazine earlier this month as the story was getting wide attention found that 41 percent of those polled were less likely to purchase hamburger at grocery stores; 54 percent were less likely to buy hamburgers at fast-food restaurants. The poll's margin of error was plus or minus 5 percentage points.

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Marcy said the federal government's new system of food-safety controls, known as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, HACCP as it's called, will have a minimal effect on reducing food-borne illness. The program will require more-extensive testing and better record-keeping on monitoring bacteria in meat and other foods. But contamination can occur at all stages of food production, from farm to table, Marcy said.

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The preventive measures HACCP calls for are being phased in at food-processing plants. However, HACCP does not require specific testing for E. coli 0157:H7.

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GRAPHIC: Chronology by Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/KIRK MONTGOMERY

Photos by Associated Press

A sign explaining that Burger King was not serving hamburgers hangs in the drive-through window Aug. 22 at Lincoln, Neb. Some burger fans couldn't have it their way at the national chain after Hudson Foods announced it was shutting down a plant and recalling 25 million pounds of possibly tainted beef. Burger King later ended its relationship with supplier Hudson.

Workers at the Hudson Foods plant in Columbus, Neb., process ground beef Aug. 18. No matter how sophisticated government testing of meat and poultry becomes, the sheer volume may make it impossible to detect all dangerous bacteria in food, inspectors say.

Photo by Arkansas Democrat-Gazette/DAVID GOTTSCHALK

Hudson Foods, primarily a poultry company, has had a troubled entry into the beef market.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: September 12, 1997

LEVEL 1 - 10 OF 22 STORIES

Copyright 1997 News & Record (Greensboro, NC)
News & Record (Greensboro, NC)

September 14, 1997, Sunday, ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: IDEAS, Pg. F1

LENGTH: 714 words

HEADLINE: IRRADIATION COULD SOLVE PROBLEM OF FOOD SAFETY

BYLINE: BY RUTH KAVA; Knight-Ridder News Service

BODY:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has tightened safety inspections at meat processing plants, but the way to prevent future large-scale outbreaks of E. coli bacteria is food pasteurization by irradiation.

It's happened again: The disease-causing E. coli O157:H7 bacteria was detected in hamburger produced in the Hudson Food processing plant in Nebraska after causing more than a dozen Colorado consumers to get ill. Luckily, no one died from this latest outbreak of food poisoning, which prompted the largest recall of meat ever, with some 25 million pounds being destroyed.

could the dramatic problem have been avoided?

Many, including Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, are calling for more government oversight and regulation to prevent such problems. But these "solutions" aren't the answer. The answer lies in technology: food pasteurization by irradiation.

Pasteurization, to most people, means milk. And, of course, the vast majority of milk is pasteurized - by heating it. But pasteurization really means killing disease-causing organisms in food, and that can be done by irradiation as well as by heat.

For different reasons, "consumer activist" groups and industry both have opposed food irradiation as a means of enhancing food safety. The activists, in many cases, oppose it because they are antitechnology and wrongly think any new technology would create health risks.

Business, on the other hand, has shied away from the technology because it is concerned consumers won't accept irradiated foods.

Neither of these concerns is valid. The safety and effectiveness of food irradiation has been demonstrated time and again over the last 50 years. Our astronauts in space eat irradiated foods because they last a long time without refrigeration. Hospital patients with weakened immune systems may be fed irradiated foods to decrease the risk of acquiring infections their bodies can't handle. Food irradiation has actually been approved in more than 40 countries. In the United States it is approved for a number of foods, including pork and poultry. A petition to allow the pasteurization of beef by irradiation was submitted to the federal Food and Drug Administration in 1994, but the FDA

... hasn't acted on it.

Last summer the Department of Agriculture began the process of improving safety by modernizing its inspection service. All slaughter and processing plants will have to better control their operating processes, identifying all steps in the process at which foods could be contaminated and take appropriate measures to prevent or reduce such hazards. These controls will include requirements for microbial testing for salmonella and other bacteria that are typical causes of food-borne illness.

President Clinton also has asked Congress for increased funds to hire additional food-safety inspectors, upgrade the government's scientific capabilities used to find and identify illness-causing bacteria and streamline the nation's meat, poultry and seafood inspection systems.

Such changes will make it easier to identify an outbreak of food-borne illness before it becomes widespread and allow scientists to track more accurately and swiftly the causes of any particular outbreak to its source - whether it be unpasteurized apple juice, undercooked or mishandled hamburger or imported fruits and berries.

Unfortunately, many of the changes are tantamount to shutting the barn door after the cows have left. Granted, we'll be shutting the door more quickly, but the cows will be out nevertheless.

What we really need, in addition to more refinements of already existing technologies and systems, is a method to decrease the amount of bacteria or other contaminants in our food. We should be pasteurizing our meat, poultry and seafood with irradiation. That, and that alone, would actually decrease the number of disease-causing micro-organisms on poultry, meat or seafood. None of the other proposed changes can be guaranteed to do that.

So, while we're looking for ways to improve the safety of our food supply, let's not neglect a method that many times over has been shown to be both safe and effective. Let's get food irradiation included in our food protection plans.

LOAD-DATE: September 15, 1997

LEVEL 1 - 20 OF 21 STORIES

Copyright 1997 The Omaha World-Herald Company
Omaha World-Herald

October 8, 1997, Wednesday SUNRISE EDITION

SECTION: BUSINESS; Pg. 22

LENGTH: 365 words

HEADLINE: Bill Gives USDA Teeth Measure Would Allow Faster Recalls, Fines

BYLINE: JAKE THOMPSON

SOURCE: WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

DATELINE: Washington

BODY:

Prompted by several recent high-profile meat recalls and food safety concerns, Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, and Democratic colleagues introduced a bill Tuesday aimed at speeding recalls and stiffening fines against companies that willfully violate food safety rules.

On the other hand, Nebraska's two senators, Democrat Bob Kerrey and Republican Chuck Hagel, expressed concerns about the legislation's potential effects on a vital part of their state's economy, beef.

Hagel said he opposes the bill, as do beef industry groups. Kerrey said he might end up backing it but said he thinks the Agriculture Department should also seek quicker testing to boost public confidence in meat and poultry.

The Food Safety Enforcement Act of 1997, as the bill is called, and recent beef recalls will be discussed today at a Senate hearing.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said recently that the Clinton administration was seeking the new power to order recalls - rather than request them - after the recall of 25 million pounds of frozen hamburger from the former Hudson Foods plant in Columbus, Neb.

That recall came after several people became ill in Colorado after eating Hudson beef tainted with a dangerous strain of E. coli.

The bill introduced Tuesday would give the agriculture secretary power to order recalls, impose civil fines of up to \$ 100,000 and require that the public be better notified of meat recalls, Harkin said.

He noted that the agriculture secretary now has the power to fine violators of the Pecan Promotion Act but not to protect public health from possibly tainted meat.

"If the secretary of agriculture can take civil action to protect pecans, he can take civil action to protect people," Harkin said at a press conference, joined by Sens. Patrick Leahy of Vermont and Tim Johnson of South Dakota.

Omaha World-Herald, October 8, 1997

The American Meat Institute, grocery store owners, meat processors and a number of Republicans oppose giving the USDA the new recall authority. They say the agriculture secretary already has enough power to force action by threatening to withdraw federal inspectors from plants, forcing a shutdown.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: October 9, 1997

LEVEL 1 - 4 OF 21 STORIES

Copyright 1997 The San Diego Union-Tribune
The San Diego Union-Tribune

October 11, 1997, Saturday

SECTION: OPINION; Ed. B-8;Pg. 1,6,7
Ed. B-10;Pg. 2,3,4,5

LENGTH: 283 words

HEADLINE: Glickman's beef;
USDA wants more power over meat producers

BODY:

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman was on Capitol Hill this week, urging lawmakers to pass legislation that would give his department broader authority over the nation's beef, poultry and pork producers.

Appearing before the Senate Agriculture Committee, Glickman asserted that consumers would be better protected from contaminated meat if the USDA were given the power to issue mandatory meat recalls and to impose fines of up to \$100,000 per violation per day.

Now, if there was an authentic problem with the nation's meat supply, if rogue slaughterhouses or meat packing plants were knowingly and willfully exposing consumers to contaminated meat, then Glickman might be justified in asking broadened authority for his department.

But there is no safety crisis with the nation's meat supply. And in the rare cases in which contaminated meat is discovered -- most recently, at a Nebraska beef processing plant owned by Hudson Foods -- the meat producer has always recalled the suspect meat.

Now, if Glickman wants to make it so that future beef recalls are unnecessary, he should urge the Food and Drug Administration to drop its three-year resistance to irradiation of beef.

Irradiation is already permitted for pork and poultry, not to mention fruits and vegetables. It has been scientifically proven to be the safest and most effective means of killing such harmful meat contaminants as E. coli, trichina and salmonella.

Had Hudson Foods been permitted to irradiate its beef, the meat producer would not have been forced to recall a record 25 million pounds of hamburger in August.

And Glickman would not be seeking expanded regulatory powers for his department.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

D-DATE: October 12, 1997

2/9/19 (Item 1 from file: 706)
DIALOG(R)File 706:(New Orleans)Times Picayune
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09282206

USDA SEEKING CLOUT FOR FOOD RECALLS, FINES
New Orleans Times Picayune (NO) - Thursday, October 9, 1997
By: ERIK TANOUE Hearst Newspapers
Edition: THIRD Section: NATIONAL Page: A2
Word Count: 162

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Agriculture needs more muscle, including the power to recall tainted meat and fine companies that produce it, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman told a Senate panel Wednesday.

"When a company has reason to believe there's a public food safety problem, government should get the call first," Glickman said. "Government should also have the authority to order a mandatory recall."

Wednesday's hearing before the Senate Agriculture Committee followed the introduction Tuesday of legislation that would grant the USDA such power.

Recent problems, including the recall of 25 million pounds of ground beef from a Hudson Foods Inc. plant in Nebraska and South Korea's reported detection of potentially deadly E.coli bacteria in U.S. beef, have prompted calls for stronger oversight of meat safety.

Glickman said the USDA can fine circuses for abusing elephants or farmers whose potatoes are too small, but not businesses that produce unsafe food. USDA has broad inspection power, but Glickman contends its enforcement authority is too weak.

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LEVEL 1 - 1 OF 17 STORIES

Copyright 1997 Times Printing Company
The Chattanooga Times

October 8, 1997, Wednesday

SECTION: National; Pg. A9

LENGTH: 680 words

HEADLINE: Meat industry promoting alternative to costly recalls

BYLINE: By Curt Anderson, The Associated Press

BODY:

WASHINGTON -- As the Clinton administration pushes for mandatory recalls and tougher penalties in contaminated meat cases, the industry is promoting an alternative that kills dangerous bacteria: irradiation.

Fearing the economic fallout of more highly publicized recalls, the meat industry is trying to persuade the Food and Drug Administration to approve irradiation for beef and is lobbying Congress to allow smaller, less ominous irradiation labels for all foods.

"We need to make this food safety tool available for the public," said Rhona Applebaum, executive vice president for scientific and regulatory affairs at the National Food Processors Association.

Irradiation -- exposing food to low levels of radiation -- is already permitted for poultry, pork, fruits and vegetables, but is not in widespread use for several reasons: consumer wariness, expense and opposition by consumer groups that question its safety.

This summer's recall of 25 million pounds of Hudson Foods Inc. ground beef has focused new attention on meat safety and how to guard against illnesses caused by such foodborne bacteria as E. coli and salmonella.

Tainted meat was in the news again last week with the recall of nearly 444,000 pounds of ground beef processed at a Nebraska plant and South Korea's detection of E. coli on beef supplied by another Nebraska meatpacker.

The Senate Agriculture Committee has scheduled a hearing Wednesday to discuss food safety and the potential of new technology such as irradiation.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman wants Congress to grant him authority to issue mandatory recalls instead of using persuasion and public pressure to get companies to do recalls voluntarily, as is now the case.

Glickman wants authority to seek civil penalties of up to \$100,000 per violation per day and a requirement that anyone in the food supply chain from slaughterhouse to restaurant notify USDA if there is any evidence of contamination.

In introducing the administration's bill Tuesday, Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, said the current system does not give people "total assurance" that the meat they eat is safe.

The Chattanooga Times, October 8, 1997

"These are vital tools the secretary just doesn't have today," Harkin said.

Consumer advocates say mandatory recall and tougher penalties will give companies greater incentives to adhere to food safety rules and not cover up mistakes.

"Human lives shouldn't depend on a secretary's charm or force of personality," said Carol Tucker Foreman of the Safe Food Coalition.

The food processing industry, however, contends that USDA can already effectively force companies to issue recalls by using public pressure and can close down plants by pulling its inspectors from production lines. Criminal charges can be brought and contaminated products can be seized.

"The punitive measures sought by USDA will do nothing to enhance the safety of the meat supply or prevent future foodborne illness outbreaks," said J. Patrick Boyle, president of the American Meat Institute.

The institute and other industry groups say new technology such as irradiation offers consumers even greater protection from harmful microbes. The industry has already cleared some congressional hurdles toward using the process in beef production and possibly increasing its use in poultry, fruit and other products.

The FDA overhaul bill passed Tuesday by the House -- and a similar version passed previously by the Senate -- would allow companies to use labels on irradiated products that are no larger than those used for ingredients. Current law mandates that the word "irradiation" be much larger, which food manufacturers say is a customer turnoff.

"It takes it from being what looks like a warning label to something not as scary-looking," Tim Willard, spokesman for the Food Processors Association, said of the bill.

In addition, the House version would require the FDA to act within 60 days on a petition allowing irradiation for red meat that has been pending for three years. FDA officials already say the petition is a top food safety priority.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: October 8, 1997

2/9/7 (Item 1 from file: 632)
DIALOG(R)File 632:Chicago Tribune
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09282328

AGRICULTURE CHIEF PRESSES FOR WIDER POWER OVER MEAT

Chicago Tribune (CT) - THURSDAY, October 9, 1997

By: Associated Press.

Edition: NORTH SPORTS FINAL Section: BUSINESS Page: 3

Word Count: 522

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - The Agriculture Department can impose fines on circuses that mistreat elephants and dealers who sell undersized potatoes, but not on meat companies that produce contaminated food, officials complained Wednesday.

"At a certain point, it becomes fairly evident who's being protected here," Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman told a Senate panel. "I think we can come down a little more strongly on the side of the consumer."

Glickman urged the Senate Agriculture Committee to approve legislation to expand the USDA's enforcement authority in cases of contaminated meat and poultry.

The bill would give the USDA powers to issue mandatory product recalls, impose fines of up to \$100,000 per violation per day and require that the department be notified when any suspected contamination is found in the food distribution system, from slaughterhouse to dinner table.

In the aftermath of the recall of 25 million pounds of Hudson Foods Inc. ground beef that possibly was tainted with E. coli bacteria, Glickman said, new powers are crucial to ensure that companies are adopting new anti-contamination systems and that the industry responds immediately when a product is suspected of being unsafe. The company agreed to the recall in August under USDA pressure.

"It's as much an insurance policy as anything else," Glickman said. "Most companies are willing to rise to this responsibility. But in talking about enforcement, we're talking about dealing with the few who don't."

Many senators, however, appeared skeptical about granting such broad powers to the USDA that could economically ruin food companies, particularly because agency officials could only point to about a dozen cases when companies delayed issuing voluntary meat recalls over the past five years. None refused outright.

"They don't need the threat of a \$100,000 fine hanging out there," said Democratic Sen. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska, home of the Hudson plant and another plant involved in a recent contaminated meat recall. "I'm not sure this is going to be able to increase consumer confidence."

Added Sen. Pat Roberts (R-Kan.): "We always seem to get into sort of a crisis management situation. I think the proposal is punitive."

Other senators said the promise of new technology, such as irradiation--which kills bacteria such as E. coli and salmonella--and improved testing of products makes more sense than expanded enforcement, because it could prevent outbreaks of illness.

"It's got to be supplemented with something that gets to the heart of the problem," Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), chairman of the committee, said of Glickman's proposal.

Glickman said it appears likely the Food and Drug Administration will soon approve a 3-year-old petition to permit irradiation for red meat. The process already has been approved for poultry, pork, fruits and vegetables but has not been widely adopted-- mainly due to consumer wariness.

USDA officials say consumers must be educated about the safety of irradiation before companies will widely use it, just as it took time for people to accept milk pasteurization and fluoridation of water.

CAPTION:

PHOTO: Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman testifies Wednesday before the Senate Agriculture Committee about the proposal to allow the agency to issue mandatory recalls and impose fines. AP photo.

DESCRIPTORS: AGRICULTURE; PRODUCT; FOOD; DISEASE; FEDERAL;
GOVERNMENT;
AGENCY

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Others have taken to sponsoring alter-riously injured by a contaminated treat re

Agriculture boss: We can do more for food safety

Orlando Sentinel 10/31/97

By Dan Glickman

SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

Amid our national fervor for less government, many Washingtonians did double takes when a recent poll revealed that nearly two-thirds of Americans say they want their government to do more to ensure the safety of their food.

People look to their government to protect them from dangers beyond their control — to make sure plane engines work, banks are solvent and food is safe. With our food industry changing so dramatically, government's means of ensuring food safety have to change, too.

Americans are eating more food from around the world. And domestic food production now occurs on a massive scale in which, for example, a million pounds of hamburger (a day's work at the big plants) can quickly appear in restaurants and grocery stores throughout the country.

These changes require a more sophisticated food-safety strategy. This administration is moving forward on a number of fronts: international efforts to lift other countries' food-safety standards; research into the root causes of contamination; stepped-up consumer education; and expanded nationwide monitoring to detect and halt outbreaks of food-borne illnesses quickly.

For meat and poultry — the U.S. Department of Agriculture's arena — the major new weapon against food-borne illness is HACCP, short for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points. Forget the jargon. What it means is we're moving from century-old, touch-sight-and-smell inspections to a system that's based in the most advanced science. For the first time, we will test for invisible threats, such as E. coli bacteria and salmonella. For the first time, companies will be required not just to catch unsafe food but to close the safety gaps that invite contamination. For the first time, the focus is on prevention.

With this higher safety bar, no country will be allowed to export food to the United States unless that country provides the same high level of safety to our consumers.

HACCP is a giant step in the fight against food-borne illness. It will give us a more consistently safe food supply. But for this new approach to work, government must be able to enforce it.

Right now, when it comes to food, government has only what we call the "atomic bomb." In the case of meat and poultry, that's the power to withdraw inspectors and effectively shut down a plant's operations.

This all-or-nothing approach won't cut it under the new system. The fact is, the old rules worked well for a different time, but it's a whole new world out there. As industry strives to meet the new, higher standards, government needs degrees of power that ensure that companies pay attention to details

— from keeping good records to practicing each step in their safety plans.

Most plants are run by good people who understand that safe food sells. These folks correct small safety slips as soon as they're warned. Unfortunately, others need a stronger nudge. It's important that government provide it. The quicker we fix minor problems, the less likely they are to turn into major public-health incidents.

We also need to ensure that companies notify the government promptly when they suspect that contaminated food has entered the marketplace. Government can't do a thing to protect people until we know there's a problem. USDA uncovered a situation in which a company notified a restaurant chain about potentially unsafe food 48 hours before it told us. The result? The chain pulled the food two days before grocery stores and public-health officials even had a chance to act. That's two days when people could have become ill or worse.

Mandatory recalls are equally essential. They short-circuit the rare, bad actor who stalls when prompt action is necessary, and they ensure a rapid response throughout the commercial food chain. Given the volumes of food today's companies put out, even when everyone acts in good faith, it is a monumental undertaking to get all of the product back quickly. Mandatory recalls are consumers' insurance policy. If a voluntary recall fails, government has the power to demand that each corner store, supermarket, restaurant and cafeteria pulls the suspect food quickly.

Legislation now before Congress would grant government these long-overdue powers: to fine companies that violate food safety laws, to require prompt government notification when contaminated food may be on the market and to order mandatory recalls.

Although consumers embrace these measures, industry predictably has pounced on them as "big government." I think the company line is hard to toe today. The justification is more clear, as is the public support.

After all, when a car kills because of faulty manufacturing, or a plane engine fails, revealing critical safety gaps, or a toy harms the children it was meant to please, people like the fact that their government can act quickly and decisively to pull dangerous products from the marketplace and fine those who compromise our safety.

As the law stands today, government cannot use these same powers to protect you from unsafe food. In fact, in the case of civil fines, USDA has more authority to protect circus elephants than to protect consumers.

It's time to fix that. It's time to stop treating unsafe food differently from any other threat to the public health.



Glickman

Dan Glickman is the secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He wrote this commentary for The Orlando Sentinel.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, left, and Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala appeared with germ character BAC at a press conference yesterday in Washington.

New campaign stresses food safety

Cartoon 'germ' is centerpiece of U.S. effort

By CURT ANDERSON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A green germ cartoon character is the centerpiece of a new effort to educate consumers about protecting against foodborne illness at home.

The campaign, paid for mostly by some \$550,000 from the food industry, is called "Fight BAC," a reference to a globelike character that will be shown trying to spread contamination throughout a kitchen.

"The BAC character puts a face on foodborne bacteria, which we believe will help Americans remember that they have the power

to control bacteria in their home kitchens," said Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala.

The most sophisticated testing and screening of food cannot guarantee it is free of harmful microbes, aptly demonstrated by this summer's recall of 25 million pounds of ground beef tainted with E. coli bacteria and by other events involving meat, berries and vegetables.

"Even as industry and government step up their food-safety activities, consumers need to understand that they are the last line of defense in assuring the safety of the foods they eat," Shalala said.

Foodborne pathogens such as E. coli, campylobacter, listeria and salmonella cause up to 9,000 deaths and 33 million illnesses a year, according to the Agriculture Department.

Along with TV ads featuring BAC, there will be posters, store

brochures and refrigerator magnets. There is also an Internet Web site (<http://www.fightbac.org>) that will offer the latest news and tips on foodborne illness and food safety.

The food industry sees consumer education as more important in preventing illnesses than increased government enforcement in recalling products and punishing companies.

"You do need to remember to take some basic precautions," said Sara Lilygren of the American Meat Institute.

The campaign will stress these four steps:

- Wash hands and table surfaces often.
- Prevent cross-contamination between foods.
- Cook foods to the proper temperatures.
- Refrigerate food promptly.

09298118

FOOD-SAFETY CAMPAIGN URGES CLEANLINESS, THOROUGH COOKING

Rocky Mountain News (RM) - Saturday, October 25, 1997

By: Julie Vorman Reuter

Edition: Final Section: News/National/International Page: 42A

Word Count: 270

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - The U.S. government launched a campaign Friday to urge consumers to prevent food poisoning by washing their hands, thoroughly cooking meat and taking other basic precautions in the kitchen.

The heads of the U.S. Agriculture Department and the Health and Human Services Department said the advertising campaign was part of a wide-ranging effort to improve food safety from farm to fork after a series of recalls of tainted meat this year.

Food safety is a complicated issue. There is no one silver bullet," Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said. There has to be responsibility at every stage of the food production, processing and delivery chain."

The public education campaign urges consumers to fight bac" - short for bacteria - by washing their hands before cooking, separating raw meat from vegetables and cooking foods thoroughly. Posters and a public-service announcements feature a cartoon depiction of a bacterium.

Glickman said the Agriculture Department, which created the Smokey Bear character the U.S. Forest Service uses, hopes the green, fuzzy bacterium will become just as well-known.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that more than 9,000 Americans fall sick each year to food-borne illnesses. That costs the U.S. economy nearly \$35 billion in lost work and medical costs, some experts say.

Food safety was thrust back into the spotlight this year when an outbreak of E. coli 0157:H7 illness in Colorado forced Hudson Foods to recall a record 25 million pounds of frozen hamburger patties.

About 450,000 pounds of contaminated hamburger was recalled last month by BeefAmerica, and South Korean officials found tainted hamburger in a shipment of U.S. imports.

LIB2

09330040

AG CHIEF TALKS TURKEY WITH CALLERS
STATE (COLUMBIA) (CS) - Wednesday, November 26, 1997
By: JAMES KUHNHENN Knight-Ridder Newspapers
Edition: FINAL Section: FRONT Page: A9
Word Count: 384

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - When Grandma isn't quite sure about the particulars of thawing a turkey or making giblet gravy, whom can she turn to? Put her on the phone with Big Brother.

Every Thanksgiving, the U.S. Department of Agriculture gets up to 1,500 calls to its toll-free meat and poultry hot line from cooks anxious about how to prepare a tasty, pathogen-free bird.

But it isn't every Thanksgiving that they get a member of the president's cabinet to answer their questions. For about 30 minutes Tuesday, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, who has tried to make food safety a hallmark of his tenure, handled the calls.

Glickman calls himself a carver more than a cook. But, with a home economist at his side, he dispensed advice on meat temperatures, stuffing and how to detect a spoiled carcass.

"I've been tasked with preparing the Thanksgiving bird," said a novice cook from Kosciusko, Miss. "I have a bird and I have a meat thermometer; I've never used a meat thermometer."

Bessie Berry, the 11-year veteran manager of the USDA hotline, mouthed an answer. "I understand from Bessie," Glickman replied, "that it should be inserted between the breast and the thigh into the most dense part of the thigh meat."

Glickman savored the moment.

"We just saved somebody's life," he said with self-mocking delight.

The USDA hot line - (800) 535-4555 - is hardly the most popular Thanksgiving help line around. That honor goes to the Butterball Turkey Talk-Line - (800) 323-4848 - which on Monday received 15,971 calls.

Based on the questions, few Americans get their turkeys straight from the barnyard. "The top topic," said Butterball Turkey Talk-Line supervisor Dorothy Jones, "is thawing the turkey."

Unlike the Butterball line, which is open from Nov. 3 to Dec. 23, the USDA line is open year-round providing advice that ranges from understanding food labels to what to do when a freezer breaks down. But, Berry said, 20 percent of the 138,000 hotline calls the USDA receives each year come during the Thanksgiving holiday.

By the end of his phone stint, Glickman had grown reflective.

"A lot of the stuff we do in this department affects people, but you can't really say it affects their lives instantaneously," he said. "This is actually one that affects their lives instantaneously."

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DESCRIPTORS: HOLIDAY; AGRICULTURE; FOOD

09330069

AGRICULTURE SECRETARY TAKES TURN TALKING TURKEY ON USDA HOTLINE

Seattle Times (SE) - Wednesday November 26, 1997

By: WASHINGTON POST: AP

Edition: FINAL Section: NEWS Page: A8

Word Count: 204

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman knows what terrifies Americans.

Spoiled turkey.

During his stint manning his department's meat and poultry hotline yesterday, Glickman fielded five calls from folks already fretting over their feast. None seemed impressed to have Mr. USDA on the line. They just wanted reassurance.

Glickman's advice: Don't let hot food sit out for hours, don't mix the stuffing too far ahead of time, and if you're in doubt about the freshness of your raw bird, bend over and take a good whiff. Spoilage has an overpowering smell.

One woman in Texas wanted to know whether it was safe to make her dressing in advance and then put it in a cooler for a long drive to the Texas-Texas A&M football game.

"That's fine, just keep it cold," Glickman said. "That's a big game."

The secretary acquired his expertise from his department experts, not from personal experience. His own Thanksgiving cooking customs?

"Traditionally, they are more in the observation mode," he said.

Hotline open on Thanksgiving

The USDA's meat and poultry hotline is 1-800-535-4555. It is staffed from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. PST Monday through Friday and 5 a.m. to 11 a.m. PST on Thanksgiving.

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09330101

TURKEY HOTLINE COOKING THIS YEAR WORKERS ANSWER 500 CALLS A DAY

Sun Sentinel (FL) - Wednesday, November 26, 1997

By: The Associated Press

Edition: FINAL Section: NATIONAL Page: 3A

Word Count: 366

MEMO:

COLUMN: NATION

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - A woman in New York wants to know if the turkey she bought fresh last week will still be good on Thanksgiving. A Mississippi man isn't quite sure how to use a meat thermometer.

The Agriculture Department's hotline is open with answers that could prevent a festive holiday from turning into an outbreak of food poisoning.

In many cases, I think we are successful in preventing food-borne illness," said Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman. Most of the things we tell them are actually very simple, but they are important and sometimes forgotten."

The agency's meat and poultry hotline is staffed year-round, but there is a marked increase in calls around big holidays such as Thanksgiving. The 13 staff members all have backgrounds in home economics or dietetics and receive training before they start taking the estimated 500 calls a day this time of year.

Glickman visited the hotline office Tuesday to underscore its role in providing information to avert sicknesses caused by spoilage or bacteria through improper handling and cooking.

To the woman in New York who bought her unfrozen turkey last week, Glickman said in most cases a fresh bird should be eaten within two days of purchase. To check for spoilage, he advised her to unwrap the turkey and let it sit for about 15 minutes to determine if there's an odor.

If it smells, she should get another bird.

The fellow in Kosciusko, Miss., told Glickman that he needed some advice about the thermometer because he had never tried to roast a turkey before.

Glickman and Bessie Berry, who runs the hotline, told him to place the thermometer between the breast and the densest portion of the thigh. The bird will be done when the temperature reaches 180 degrees F.

Although the Agriculture Department hotline is geared toward meat and poultry, staff members can answer questions on how to prepare and store a wide range of foods.

The meat and poultry hotline is 800-535-4555. It is staffed from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day. There are messages on food topics available 24 hours a day.

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DESCRIPTORS: TURKEY; HOTLINE COOKING; FOOD;

Wichita (KS) Eagle

Spray kills salmonella, cuts meat safety risk

March 20, 1998

■ Ag Secretary Dan Glickman calls product a milestone for food safety.

By Tom Webb

The Wichita Eagle

WASHINGTON — Salmonella, one of the most common and serious food-borne menaces, could be sharply reduced in chicken and turkey by an "exciting breakthrough," Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced Thursday.

Federal officials have approved a spray that kills the salmonella bacteria in young chickens, thereby keeping it out of the food chain and away from consumers.

Up to 2 million Americans each year suffer from salmonella poisoning, and about 1,000 die, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates. Raw or undercooked poultry products are the most common source, health officials say.

Scientists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture developed the anti-salmonella treatment, which can be sprayed on newborn chicks "like a car going through a carwash," said co-discoverer John DeLoach. The spray goes on sale in May and eventually could boost supermarket poultry prices by about 2 cents a pound, he said.

"We tested 80,000 chicks," Glickman said. "The presence of salmonella was reduced to zero with just one spray right as they hatched. ... We are also now seeking to apply the same principle in cattle and hogs — which holds the promise of opening up a whole new world for prevention of food-borne illness."



Glickman

See SALMONELLA, Page 9A

SALMONELLA

From Page 1A

Salmonella typically results in diarrhea, fever and abdominal cramps that last four to seven days, said CDC spokesman Tom Skinner. Most people recover without treatment. But in rare cases, the infection can spread and result in death, Skinner said.

The anti-salmonella spray works in young chicks by promoting the growth of natural "good" bacteria. Once the chicks are treated, the "bad" bacteria can't establish a toe-hold, DeLoach said. Preliminary results indicate the spray may reduce other food-borne bacteria, including E. coli.

The National Broiler Council, which represents the poultry industry, was cautiously optimistic.

"I'd say it's a potential breakthrough," said spokesman Richard Lobb. "It worked well in the trials, and now it has to go to the field. If it works well, it will probably meet with a great deal of acceptance."

Consumer groups also welcomed the news, in part "because it takes food safety back to the farm," said Caroline Smith DeWaal, director of food safety for the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

"Right now, food safety really starts at the slaughterhouse gate and then

proceeds to the consumer, farmers have taken very little responsibility for making sure that birds aren't infected," she said.

A recent study showed that 16 cent of chickens carry the salmonella bacteria, down from about 35 per a decade ago. Along with processors, consumers have s dered much of the anti-salmo battle, with warnings to adequ cook poultry to kill any bacteria to wash all utensils that come in tact with raw poultry.

Those warnings won't ch Glickman said at the National Club.

"This is a major milestone for safety," he said. "But I do wa make clear that proper proce and safe in-kitchen preparatio main essential."

Weather permitting, Glickma be in Wichita today. At Lincol mentary School, he will highlig USDA's school breakfast pro. And at 9 a.m. he is scheduled liver the keynote address at the ernor's Kansas State Agricultur ference at the Hyatt.

Tom Webb reports on the Kansa gressional delegation in Washing D.C. He may be reached at (202) 6055.

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THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

November 27, 1997, Thursday, HOME FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 70A

LENGTH: 487 words

HEADLINE: Agriculture secretary mans turkey hotline USDA service dispenses cooking advice

BYLINE: James Kuhnhenh, Knight-Ridder Newspapers

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

WASHINGTON - When Grandma isn't quite sure about the particulars of thawing a turkey or making giblet gravy, to whom can she turn? Put her on the phone with Big Brother.

Every Thanksgiving, the U.S. Department of Agriculture gets as many as 1,500 calls to its toll-free meat and poultry hotline from cooks anxious about how to prepare a tasty, pathogen-free bird.

But it isn't every Thanksgiving that they get a member of the president's Cabinet to answer their questions. For about 30 minutes Tuesday, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, who has tried to make food safety a hallmark of his tenure, handled the calls.

Mr. Glickman calls himself a carver more than a cook. But, with a home economist at his side, he dispensed advice on meat temperatures, stuffing and how to detect a spoiled carcass.

"I've been tasked with preparing the Thanksgiving bird," said a novice cook from Kosciusko, Miss. "I have a bird, and I have a meat thermometer; I've never used a meat thermometer."

Bessie Berry, the 11-year veteran manager of the USDA hotline, mouthed an answer.

"I understand from Bessie," Mr. Glickman replied, "that it should be inserted between the breast and the thigh, into the most dense part of the thigh meat."

Mr. Glickman savored the moment. "We just saved somebody's life," he said with self-mocking delight.

The USDA hotline (1-800-535-4555) is hardly the most popular Thanksgiving help line around. That honor goes to the Butterball Turkey Talk-Line (1-800-323-4848), which on Monday received 15,971 calls.

Based on the questions, few Americans get their turkeys straight from the barnyard.

"The top topic," said Butterball Turkey Talk-Line supervisor Dorothy Jones, "is thawing the turkey." Unlike the Butterball line, which is open from Nov. 3 to Dec. 23, the USDA line is open year-round, providing advice that ranges from understanding food labels to what to do when a freezer breaks down.

But, Ms. Berry said, 20 percent of the 138,000 hotline calls the USDA receives each year come during the Thanksgiving holiday.

A New York woman asked Mr. Glickman to settle a dispute with her butcher. She bought a fresh turkey last Thursday, she said, because the butcher told her that if she waited, "there might not be any left."

"Let me just tell you, based upon my knowledge," Mr. Glickman said, "a fresh turkey should be cooked or frozen within two days of purchase. I think you risk the possibility of spoilage."

Ms. Berry then interceded and explained that the turkey would not necessarily be bad. A simple sniff test would settle the matter, she said.

By the end of his phone stint, Mr. Glickman had grown reflective.

"A lot of the stuff we do in this department affects people, but you can't really say it affects their lives instantaneously," he said. "This is actually one that affects their lives instantaneously."

Distributed by Knight-Ridder Tribune News Wire

GRAPHIC: PHOTO(S): Dan Glickman . . . agriculture chief calls food safety one of his priorities.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 5, 1997

Copyright 1997 Chattanooga News-Free Press Company
Chattanooga Free Press

November 27, 1997, Thursday

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. J2

LENGTH: 199 words

HEADLINE: Food Hot Line Offers Tips On Safety

BYLINE: By The Associated Press

BODY:

WASHINGTON -- This is the busiest season for the year-round Agriculture Department's hot line, which provides information to avert food poisoning from improper handling and cooking.

Near Thanksgiving, 13 staffers with training in food safety field more than 500 calls a day to the toll-free number.

Although the Agriculture Department hot line is geared toward meat and poultry, staff members can answer questions on how to prepare and store a wide range of foods.

"In many cases, I think we are successful in preventing food-borne illness," said Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman during a visit to the hot line office, where he spoke with callers. "Most of the things we tell them are actually very simple, but they are important and sometimes forgotten."

The Agriculture Department's meat and poultry hot line is 1-800-535-4555. It is staffed from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. EST Monday through Friday and from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. EST on Thanksgiving Day. There are recorded messages on various food topics available 24 hours a day.

Many turkey processors and food companies also operate toll-free advice lines. Check labels on turkeys and other products for those telephone numbers.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: December 3, 1997

03017924 (THIS IS THE FULLTEXT)

Hot lines drum up tips on turkey

Agriculture secretary serves sage advice

JAMES KUHNHENN, Credits, Knight-Ridder Tribune News

Houston Chronicle, 3 STAR ED, P 9

Thursday, November 27, 1997

DOCUMENT TYPE: NEWSPAPER JOURNAL CODE: HC LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT SECTION HEADING: A

Word Count: 478

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - When Grandma isn't quite sure about the particulars of thawing a turkey or making giblet gravy, whom can she turn to? Put her on the phone with Big Brother. Every Thanksgiving, the U.S. Department of Agriculture gets up to 1,500 calls to its toll-free hot line from cooks anxious about how to prepare a tasty, pathogen-free bird.

But it isn't every Thanksgiving that they get a member of the president's cabinet to answer their questions. For about 30 minutes Tuesday, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, who has tried to make food safety a hallmark of his tenure, handled the calls.

Glickman calls himself a carver more than a cook. But, with a home economist at his side, he dispensed advice on meat temperatures, stuffing and how to detect a spoiled carcass.

"I've been tasked with preparing the Thanksgiving bird," said a novice cook from Kosciusko, Miss. "I have a bird, and I have a meat thermometer, I've never used a meat thermometer."

Bessie Berry, the 11-year veteran manager of the USDA hot line, mouthed an answer. "I understand from Bessie," Glickman replied, "that it should be inserted between the breast and the thigh, into the most dense part of the thigh meat."

Glickman savored the moment. "We just saved somebody's life," he said with self-mocking delight.

The USDA hot line (1-800-535-4555) is hardly the most popular Thanksgiving help line around. That honor goes to the Butterball Turkey Talk-Line (1-800-323-4848), which on Monday received 15,971 calls.

Based on the questions, few Americans get their turkeys straight from the barnyard: "The top topic," said Butterball Turkey Talk-Line supervisor Dorothy Jones, "is thawing the turkey." Unlike the Butterball line, which is open from Nov. 3

to Dec. 23, the USDA line is open year-round, providing advice that ranges from understanding food labels to what to do when a freezer breaks down. But, Berry said, 20 percent of the 138,000 hot line calls the USDA receives each year come during the Thanksgiving holiday.

A New York woman asked Glickman to settle a dispute with her butcher. She bought a fresh turkey last Thursday, she said, because the butcher told her if she waited, "there might not be any left."

"Let me just tell you, based upon my knowledge," Glickman said, "a fresh turkey should be cooked or frozen within two days of purchase. I think you risk the possibility of spoilage."

Berry then interceded and explained the turkey would not necessarily be bad. A simple sniff test would settle the matter, she said.

By the end of his phone stint, Glickman had grown reflective. "A lot of the stuff we do in this department affects people, but you can't really say it affects their lives instantaneously," he said. "This is actually one that affects their lives instantaneously."

CAPTIONS: Mug: Dan Glickman

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SPECIAL FEATURES: Photograph

COMPANY NAMES (Dialog Generated): Butterball Turkey Talk Line ; Turkey Talk Line ; U S Department ; USDA

DESCRIPTORS: Food Contamination Health

Seattle Post Intelligencer
Jan 29, 1998

Overhaul in meat inspection no small potatoes, official says

By CAROL SMITH
PI REPORTER

Calling it a "historic advance," U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman said yesterday a new meat and poultry inspection system that went into effect this week will improve food safety for American consumers.

"This new system is a revolutionary improvement over the old approach that has not fundamentally changed in the last 90 years," Glickman said during an address to students and faculty at the University of Washington.

The old system relied on sight, touch and smell, while the new system will use microbiological testing to reduce bacteria, such as *E. coli* O157:H7. That particular strain of bacteria caused four deaths in Washington and sickened hundreds of others during an outbreak linked to Jack in the Box hamburgers five years ago.

Under the new system, called hazard analysis and critical control points, 312 of the largest plants in the country, which supply about 75 percent of the meat and poultry slaughtered in the United States, will have to test regularly for *E. coli* and salmonella. They also will have to devise safety measures to prevent contamination.

"For the first time, plants and processors will be required to not just catch contamination, but close the safety gaps that invite it," Glickman said.

Similar regulations for smaller plants will be phased in over the next two years.

The Clinton administration is putting muscle behind enforcement of the new regulations. It increased its food safety investment by \$43.5 million this year, some of which will pay for more food inspectors, Glickman said.

And next year, he said, despite decreasing the federal budget, Presi-

dent Clinton plans to propose an increase of \$101 million for food safety over 1998 levels, reflecting a continued high priority on the nation's food supply.

Before his remarks, Glickman met privately with several families affected by *E. coli* outbreaks to brief them on the new measures.

"It's a start," said Ivan Hotz of Petaluma, Calif., whose 5-year-old daughter still suffers from kidney damage due to ingesting tainted hamburger when she was 20 months old.

But some of the families also said USDA needs more authority to recall tainted food products and levy fines against plants with safety violations.

Currently, the government's only recourse is to shut down a plant, Glickman said. That has led some plants to play "regulatory chicken," allowing their complaints to pile up, but not so many that the USDA would shut them down.

The USDA would like to be able to use fines to intervene sooner in plant operations before problems escalate to the point of closure, he said.

"We can fine circuses for mistreating elephants, and we can fine people who sell undersized potatoes and people who don't keep the right paperwork on watermelons. But we can't fine companies that violate food-safety standards," he said. "That's just wrong, and we are working hard to convince Congress to give us this important power."

Food safety inspectors already have gotten more aggressive about closing plants with safety violations. Since last year, federal inspectors have shut down the operations of 20 plants for failing to meet standards, compared with only six plants during 1996.

■ P-I reporter Carol Smith can be reached at 206-448-8070 or carolsmith@seattle-pi.com

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The Seattle Times

January 29, 1998, Thursday Final Edition

SECTION: LOCAL NEWS; Pg. B1

LENGTH: 529 words

HEADLINE: E. COLI PLAN A BREATH OF FRESH AIR' -- NEW MEAT-SAFETY PROGRAM
DETAILED FOR VICTIMS' GROUP

BYLINE: JUDITH BLAKE; SEATTLE TIMES STAFF REPORTER

BODY:

Five years later, they're still paying a heavy price, and they wanted their government to know.

They also wanted to hear firsthand what's being done to prevent another massive outbreak of food-borne illness like the one that killed or sickened their children with E. coli 0157:H7 in 1993, when four Northwest children died and hundreds were made ill.

So families of that outbreak's victims met yesterday with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman at the University of Washington Medical Center, joined by victims of other outbreaks as well. About 30 people took part.

They also heard Glickman address a gathering of UW health-sciences students the government's new meat-safety program, launched this week.

Known as HACCP, for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, it requires meat- and poultry-processing plants to install their own preventive measures to improve sanitation and reduce contamination by E. coli, salmonella and other dangerous organisms.

Instead of relying on sight and smell to detect contamination, the program requires more science-based detection efforts, including microbial testing.

Can HACCP do the job? It's a big step forward but not enough, said several from the E. coli victims group.

"What there is of it is wonderful," said Kathi Allen of Bellevue, whose nephew was sickened by E. coli. "What they don't have is any ability to enforce it." Also, small plants won't have to enter the program until 2000, even though they supply a significant share of all meat and poultry, she said.

Suzanne Kiner of Seattle, whose daughter Brianne, now nearly 15, suffered serious E. coli illness in 1993, called HACCP a "breath of fresh air" and a step in a "rock-solid direction," but said the government needs the power to recall products deemed unsafe. So far, product recalls remain a voluntary step for companies.

Glickman, who's pushing to give his department authority to impose fines and recalls, said the government's legal options now are all or nothing - no penalty all or close down the plant.

He said President Clinton's 1999 budget will include an increase of \$ 101 million above 1998 levels for food-safety efforts, including enhanced inspections, research and surveillance.

Meanwhile, E. coli victims and their families still deal with the illness's aftermath. Shelby Hotz, of Sonoma County, Calif., was 20 months old when she was stricken in a 1994 E. coli outbreak. Her mother, Catherine, said Shelby was doing well until last November, when doctors detected signs of kidney failure. Now, she's in line for a kidney transplant. Her medications cost about \$ 23,000 a year, and insurance covers only part, Catherine Hotz said.

Brianne Kiner, one of the most publicized victims of the 1993 outbreak, was among those at yesterday's meeting. Stricken at age 9, she was in a coma for 42 days and suffered damage to her colon, heart, kidneys and liver.

Today, says her mother, Brianne takes horseback-riding lessons, "has worked through most of her trauma" and is turning out to have better learning capacity than it appeared after the illness. Still, she has needed years of private tutoring.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO; DAN GLICKMAN

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 30, 1998

E. coli plan a 'breath of fresh air'

New meat-safety program detailed for victims' group

By JUDITH BLAKE
Seattle Times staff reporter

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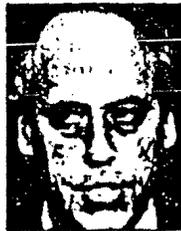
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PLEASE SEE E. coli ON B 2

E. coli plan like a 'breath of fresh air'

E. COLI

CONTINUED FROM B 1

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■ P-I reporter Carol Smith can be reached at 206-448-8070 or carolsmith@seattle-pi.com

LEVEL 1 - 14 OF 32 STORIES

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Omaha World-Herald

January 25, 1998, Sunday SUNRISE EDITION

SECTION: ;NEWS; Pg. 1b

LENGTH: 1022 words

HEADLINE: Meat-Safety System Faces Initial Test

BYLINE: HENRY J. CORDES

SOURCE: WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

BODY:

Top federal regulators are talking tough, many inspectors are confused and the beef and poultry industries are nervous as the nation's meat inspection system prepares to embark on its biggest change in almost a century.

After more than 90 years of poking and sniffing at meat products to check their wholesomeness, federal inspectors in the nation's largest slaughter and meat processing plants will start operating Monday under a new, more scientific inspection system. It's one that's not just supposed to catch contamination on meat but close the safety gaps that can cause it.

But even as the new program is poised for rollout, many of the federal inspectors who are charged with monitoring it have questions about how it's supposed to work. The industry and U.S. Department of Agriculture are also debating just how much power the agency will wield under it.

Some observers say the meat industry is in for a rocky transition.

"We've had the same system in place for 90 years, and it's not just going to disappear on Monday," said Russell Cross, a former USDA official who works with food companies on safety issues. "It will be a three- or four-year period that will be painful for the government and the industry."

Thomas Billy, director of the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, declared Friday that his agency was ready for the change and said inspectors will play a "very active" role in making sure the new system protects consumers.

"It's an exciting time," he said. "It's reasonable to have plant managers a little nervous. I think it's reasonable to have us being a little nervous."

The new inspection system arrives at a critical time for the beef industry, just months after a string of recalls due to E. coli contamination that focused attention on beef safety. Industry officials see the new inspection as a big step toward solving E. coli problems and bolstering consumer confidence.

Food safety advocates say the new system can be a plus for consumers - if it's implemented right. They say that must be proven in the months ahead.

"It looks great on paper," said Nancy Donley of the food safety advocacy group Safe Tables Our Priority. "It will only be as successful as (industry)

Omaha World-Herald, January 25, 1998

management's commitment to it."

Industry officials say they are committed to the new inspection program, known as the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point system. It is most often referred to by its acronym, HACCP, pronounced "hassip."

HACCP continues federal government oversight at plants but puts more of the day-to-day inspections and responsibility for producing safe food on the shoulders of plant operators.

Under a HACCP plan, meat producers are required to examine how they make their products and identify the critical points where mistakes can cause food safety hazards. The company must monitor its performance at those critical points and document its results.

For the first time, plants also are required to regularly test their finished product for fecal contamination, evidence the HACCP system is not working to stop contamination. The scientific tests can tip off officials to potentially dangerous microbes that are invisible to the eyes of inspectors.

When problems occur, plants are required to document what happened and what managers will do to ensure it won't happen again.

Instead of the traditional on-the-spot inspections, federal inspectors will review the plant's inspection records, examine how the system as a whole is working and make their own spot checks at critical production points.

Repeated problems would be considered a sign that a HACCP system in the plant has failed and could lead to the ultimate penalty: the USDA pulling its inspectors from the plant, effectively shutting it down.

The HACCP program becomes effective Monday in just more than 300 of the nation's largest slaughtering and processing facilities, including 11 in Nebraska and 17 in Iowa.

While they represent just a fraction of the nation's 6,400 regulated plants, they account each year for almost 75 percent of livestock slaughtered and 50 percent of all processed meat. Smaller plants will come under HACCP during the next two years.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman says HACCP represents the biggest change in the nation's meat inspection system since it was created in 1906, in the wake of writer Upton Sinclair's muckraking account of unsanitary conditions at the nation's slaughter plants.

For the first time, Glickman said, regulators will be concentrating on preventing contamination in a scientific way instead of just looking for it. He said inspectors will be fair in handling problems but will deal harshly with plants repeatedly found to produce dirty products.

Though the industry and federal government were partners in HACCP's creation, at times it has been an uneasy union, and such talk from Glickman is some in the industry jumpy. They fear inspectors will use their authority under HACCP in arbitrary ways.

Omaha World-Herald, January 25, 1998

"There are a lot of nervous people," said Rosemary Mucklow, an official with National Meat Association. "We just hope in the way this moves forward the government people show good judgment and common sense before they take trigger action."

The industry also fears that confusion among inspectors about how the new program works could lead to unnecessary enforcement actions. There is no doubt many inspectors are confused. Some say the USDA started retraining its inspectors too late and is now not ready for HACCP's start.

Felicia Nestor, a food safety advocate in Washington who frequently works with federal inspectors, said she recently posed a basic enforcement question to three inspectors and got three different answers.

"You get the same thing from everybody - confusion," she said.

Paul Thompson said he knows there are questions. He heads the special FSIS office in Omaha that will serve as the national information clearinghouse for inspectors looking for answers and clarifications on HACCP.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 25, 1998

114
USDA's Glickman calls for wider food safety powers

CHICAGO, Jan 18 (Reuters) - U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman renewed calls for broader food safety enforcement powers at a memorial service held in Chicago on Sunday for victims of a deadly 1993 outbreak of E.coli bacteria.

"We need a power that we do not have now beyond recall power," Glickman said. "I do not have the power as Secretary -- or the department doesn't -- to level civil fines on violators of food safety (law)."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is set to implement Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems -- which are science-based prevention systems -- at larger meat and poultry plants on January 26.

But the agency still lacks power to recall tainted food or levy fines for violations.

Under HACCP, meat and poultry processors must implement a system to monitor each level of production to ensure that contaminants never reach the dining table.

The memorial service, sponsored by the grassroots organization S.T.O.P. (Safe Tables Our Priority), was held on the fifth anniversary of an outbreak of E.coli 0157:H7 bacteria in the Pacific Northwest, where 700 people were sickened and four children died from eating undercooked hamburgers.

Glickman, who said that food safety was his top priority, told the service that shoddy health practices would not be tolerated following implementation of HACCP.

"We will be watching you," Glickman said. "If you're out there producing dirty product, don't expect 1,000 chances to get it right."

Parents of children sickened or killed by the 1993 E.coli outbreak who attended the memorial service said they were pleased with the government's efforts to stop foodborne illness, but also warned against complacency.

"HACCP is a big step for the American public," said Suzanne Kiner, the mother of a child sickened from eating tainted beef in Seattle in 1993. "Will I ever say enough is being done? I won't because I've held a dying child in my arms."

Kiner's 15-year-old-daughter, Brianne, survived after being sickened by E.coli in 1993, but she has no large intestine and still suffers seizures resulting from her bout with the deadly bacteria.

E.coli 0157:H7 bacteria can cause bloody diarrhea, dehydration and sometimes kidney failure. The bacteria is most dangerous for young children and the elderly and has been blamed for thousands of deaths since its discovery in 1982.

((Anna Driver, Chicago commodities desk (312)408-8720, chicago.commods.newsroom@reuters.com))

REUTERS

Rtr 20:19 01-18-98

SUBJECT: USA

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Received by NewsEDGE/LAN: 1/18/98 8:21 PM

Families of E. coli victims meet in Chicago

CHICAGO (AP) The families of victims of food-borne illnesses called for increased safety efforts, as they marked the fifth anniversary of the E. coli outbreak that led four children.

Gathered in a downtown church, 300 people lit candles, prayed and sang songs on Sunday.

"We are here to remember those who have lost their lives and those who have suffered from food-borne illness," said Nancy Donley, president of Safe Tables Our Priority. "We are here to demand from government and industry respect for the value of individual human life by taking every possible precaution in the production of food."

Donley's 6-year-old child died after eating a contaminated hamburger in 1993.

The gathering was organized by S.T.O.P., which advocates policies designed to ensure the safety of the nation's food supply. The group was founded by people whose children died from contaminated food.

"We resolve that the lives and health of our loved ones were not sacrificed in vain," said Roni Rudolph, whose 6-year-old daughter died in an outbreak of E. coli bacteria linked to contaminated hamburgers on the West Coast in 1993.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said the group has been a catalyst for change in the way the government inspects meat and poultry.

A new inspection system goes into effect for the 312 largest meat and poultry plants on Jan. 26. The system will be phased in for smaller plants over the next two years.

It changes meat and poultry inspection from the old sight, smell and touch system to one based on prevention that requires detailed record-keeping by companies.

Glickman said that he wants the department to have the power to order the recall of contaminated meats and poultry. He also wants the power to levy fines against processors who violate food safety laws.

"Those proposals do require congressional approval," Glickman said. "I hope T.O.P. will help get passage."

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 9,000 people die every year from food poisoning in the United States.

Donley said additional measures are needed, including putting warning labels on raw foods with a history of contamination, whistleblower protection for food workers and increased surveillance of food-borne illnesses.

(PROFILE

(CAT:Agriculture;)

(CAT:Medical;)

(CAT:Municipal;)

(SRC:AP; ST:IT;)

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AP-NY-01-19-98 0704EST

SUBJECT: AGRI MED

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▲ News

Families mark E. coli deaths

Clinton official vows safety efforts

Monday, January 19, 1998

CHICAGO (AP) — The families of victims of foodborne illnesses gathered Sunday to mark the five-year anniversary of the E. coli outbreak that killed four children in 1993, and heard a Clinton administration official vow greater efforts to increase food safety.

Gathered in a downtown church, the 300 people lit candles, prayed and sang songs to mark the memory of children and spouses who died from contaminated food.

The gathering was organized by Safe Tables Our Priority, which advocate policies designed to ensure the safety of the nation's food supply. The group was founded by people whose children died from contaminated food.

"We are here to remember those who have lost their lives and those who have suffered from foodborne illness," said S.T.O.P. President Nancy Donley, whose only child, a 6-year-old, died from feces-contaminated hamburger in 1993. "We are here to demand from government and industry respect for the value of individual human life by taking every possible precaution in the production of food."

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman noted that the families, unlike Upton Sinclair, whose expose, "The Jungle," prompted the first food inspection laws, did not choose to be advocates of food safety. He said their sacrifice has been a catalyst for change in the way the government inspects meat and poultry.

Glickman pointed out that a new food safety program is being implemented in meat and poultry plants nationwide later this month.

The new inspection system goes into effect for the 312 largest meat and poultry plants Jan. 26. These plants account for 75 percent of the livestock slaughtered and 50 percent of processed meat and poultry each year.

The system will be phased in for smaller plants over the next two years. It changes meat and poultry inspection from the old sight, smell and touch system to one based on

prevention that requires detailed record-keeping by companies.

Glickman said that despite concerns by the meat and poultry industries, he wants the department to have the power to order the recall of contaminated meats and poultry. He also wants the power to levy fines against processors who violate food safety laws.

"Those proposals do require congressional approval," Glickman said. "I hope S.T.O.P. will help get passage."

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 9,000 people die every year from food poisoning in the United States. Millions more are sickened; reported salmonella cases have risen from about 22,600 in 1975 to 46,000 in 1995, the latest year the numbers are available.

Donley said additional measures are needed to ensure food safety, including putting warning labels on raw foods with a history of contamination; whistle-blower protection for federal and corporate food workers, increased surveillance of foodborne illness and mandatory reporting by doctors and hospitals of patients suffering from food poisoning.

"We resolve that the lives and health of our loved ones were not sacrificed in vain," said Roni Rudolph, whose 6-year-old daughter died in an outbreak of E. coli bacteria linked to contaminated and undercooked hamburgers on the West Coast in 1993.

"It's imperative that our children be remembered as part of the solution," she said.

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LEVEL 1 - 21 OF 61 STORIES

Copyright 1998 The News Tribune
News Tribune

January 29, 1998, Thursday

SECTION: Local/State; Pg. B3

LENGTH: 319 words

HEADLINE: GLICKMAN: FOOD SAFETY A PRIORITY ;
AGRICULTURE SECRETARY SAYS A \$101 MILLION INCREASE IS PLANNED IN FISCAL 1999

BYLINE: George Tibbits; The Associated Press

BODY:

President Clinton will propose spending \$ 101 million more on food inspection and safety during the next fiscal year, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Wednesday.

Glickman made the announcement during a speech at the University of Washington in Seattle after meeting with victims of the 1993 outbreak of E. coli meat contamination in the Pacific Northwest.

Glickman also made a pitch for expanding his powers to regulate food processors. "I don't want another family to go through what the families I met with this afternoon have been through," he said.

Clinton called for improving food safety in his State of the Union address Tuesday. And on Monday, the Agriculture Department began a new system it hopes will prevent contamination in processing plants.

But Glickman said he is handicapped by law, which only permits him to shut down processors, but not fine them for lesser violations or force them to recall products.

"We should not treat unsafe food any differently from any other threat to public health," he said.

For the current fiscal year, the Agriculture Department's budget for food safety inspection is \$ 690 million, up \$ 48 million from the year before. Glickman said that government complaints aside, this is one area where people want the government to do more.

"The health interests of consumers and the economic interests of the food industry are coming together and that's because safe food sells," he said.

Diana Nole of Gig Harbor, whose firstborn son died on Jan. 22, 1993, after eating a Jack In The Box hamburger tainted by E. coli 0157:H7, said she's pleased some progress has been made toward cleaning up the nation's meat supply.

That includes faster tests to identify the presence of the pathogen in meat. Previously, it was a laborious process to test meat for it.

"And it pleases me to see the safe-food-handling labels still on meat," she said.

Safe meat sells, agriculture chief Glickman tells cattlemen

By Deborah Frazier

Rocky Mountain News Staff Writer

Bad beef is bad for business, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Thursday.

"We need to set the world standard for safety. It will pay off in sales," Glickman told the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's 100th anniversary meeting at the Colorado Convention Center.

From the European ban on U.S. beef containing hormones to the hundreds of food-poisoning cases

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Europe pressed on hormone ban

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last year tracked to a Nebraska packing plant, the safety issue has hammered at the already depressed cattle industry, he said.

Glickman said the government will continue to pressure European nations to drop the hormone-feed beef ban because there was no scientific basis for the prohibition. However, cattlemen have to do their part for beef safety, too.

"Consumers want more safety," Glickman said. "Safe food sells."

Last summer, 25 million pounds of beef were recalled after the E.

coli bacteria was found in meat that made hundreds of people seriously ill, including 16 cases in Colorado.

The problem started at the Hudson Foods Inc.'s packing house and the tainted hamburger was cooked at too low a temperature to kill the bacteria.

Hudson Foods remains under federal investigation, said Glickman, who declined to elaborate. The previous largest meat recall, which occurred in 1995, also involved meat from Hudson Foods.

Earlier this year, Glickman

called for new laws to allow USDA food officials to close plants, impose \$100,000 per day fines and more easily recall meat. The agency recently won approval to irradiate beef to kill bacteria.

A suit by the Texas Cattlemen's Association against television talk show host Oprah Winfrey for maligning beef on the air has kept the food safety issue alive. The judge in the case has imposed a gag order on cattlemen and Winfrey.

"I ought to be under that gag order too," said Glickman, declining to discuss the case.