

W. Post 2/15/96 A25



Recipe for Food Safety Starts From Scratch 108

By Bill McAllister
Washington Food Staff Writer

Three years after tainted hamburgers killed two children and sickened hundreds of others in the Pacific Northwest, the federal food inspection bureaucracy is on the verge of what some are calling the most profound change since the government began inspecting raw meat 90 years ago.

Convinced that the old bureaucracy could never adjust to a new, science-based system of food safety, Michael R. Taylor, the Agriculture Department's top food safety official, has proposed massive changes for the 10,000-employee Food Safety and Inspection Service.

The agency, Taylor said, has never fully recovered from the black eye it got after the 1993 outbreak of the deadly E. coli-0157:H7 at Jack in the Box and other West Coast restaurants. "Everything is being driven by to deal with that problem," he

Reorganizations, however, are not novel at the inspection service. "Everybody reorganizes the agency," said Carol Tucker Foreman, who was head of the service during the Carter administration and has been watching it ever since. She estimates the service is restructured "on the average of every 18 to 24 months."

Taylor's reorganization should be different, Foreman said: "There is something happening there that is very basic."

What makes the latest restructuring significant is that it is based on a new philosophy of food inspection, one that grew out of the crisis that followed the 1993 hamburger deaths. For a decade, scientists had been warning USDA it needed to move away from its old "sight, touch and smell" approach toward spotting bad meat.

With the mounting concern over the safety of hamburger, one of the nation's most popular foods,

the department devised a new, "science-based" approach. Dubbed the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, or HACCP, it broadens the service's mandate to guard against the unseen, harmful bacteria that can make meat dangerous. It sets new standards for slaughterhouses to test for salmonella, the pathogenic bacteria that USDA describes as "the most common cause of food-borne illness in the U.S."

A former deputy commissioner at the Food and Drug Administration, Taylor said the new approach will cause the inspection service to work in "a completely different way." Its 7,300 meat, poultry and egg inspectors will continue to work in the nation's 6,200 federally inspected slaughterhouses. They will remain the agency's "front line," he said.

Life for the remaining 2,700 inspection service personnel, many of them based in Washington, will change drastically, he said. Taylor's reorganization, subject to approval by Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, will slash the 46 field management offices to 18, shrink the 13 major organizational groups to 7, eliminate one level of Washington-based managers and, by fiscal 1999, cut the number of

cent. If Glickman approves, the agency would begin making changes within six months; the reorganization should take two years to complete. The change comes in addition to the overall reduction of field offices the Agriculture Department began under Mike Espy, Glickman's predecessor.

To Taylor, acting undersecretary for food safety, it is vital because he fears that a Congress determined to shrink the federal bureaucracy eventually will turn on his agency, one of Agriculture's biggest components. "If we keep doing things the way we've been doing them, then we're very vulnerable," he said.

The undersecretary already may be more exposed than he wished. Congress gave the agency only \$545 million for its operations this fiscal year, \$50 million less than what the Clinton administration wanted. Unless Congress relents, that shortage could pose a major impediment to some of the training and other programs that Taylor said are vital to implementing the new inspection program.

Overall, Taylor said he expects the agency's operating budget can absorb the costs of the restructuring. The 470 people who staff the 46 field offices will be replaced by 240 workers at the 18 district offices, a move that will cost \$16 million. He said he plans to offer displaced workers jobs in a new technical services center and two administrative centers, as well as inspection jobs in the slaughterhouses.

No layoffs are planned. One of the new District offices, covering Virginia, Maryland and Delaware, will be located in Greenbelt.

Food and consumer groups, who were briefed on the proposal last week, said they tend to support Taylor. "This HACCP plan is wonderful," said Diana Neidle, a policy associate at the Consumer Federation of America. But Neidle fears that since meat and poultry packers have to play a bigger role in policing their plants, they will pressure Congress to cut the number of in-plant inspectors.

Foreman, who coordinates an umbrella group called the Safe Food Coalition, shares fears about the new plan, which she called "fragile ... a bowl of Jello." Her

worry is that without continued public pressure, support for it will collapse: "The minute you remove the pressure, the industry and institutional forces and congressional pressure that have always run it [the inspection service] will move in and run it again," she said.

Officials at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the National Broiler Council and National Turkey Federation said their organizations all support the new concept. Alisa Harrison, a spokesperson for the cattlemen, said her group believed it was "imperative" that the inspection program change.

The change is far less drastic than what the Clinton administration first proposed after the E. coli outbreak. It initially announced plans to merge the Agriculture Department agency with the Food and Drug Administration, creating a single federal agency to police all food safety issues. That plan encountered opposition in Congress, and farm state legislators agreed in an Agriculture reorganizational bill to create a new undersecretary for food safety and place greater emphasis on public health.

"The thing that is exciting about it is they have upgraded public health," said Caroline Smith Dewaal, director of food safety for the Center for Science in the Public Interest. "That's a pretty major change. In the past, it's been almost a back-burner issue."

Some packers challenged one of Taylor's rules that declared the E. coli a contaminant. In what Agriculture officials view as a significant victory, the courts upheld Taylor's view.

That attitude has convinced some that, as Foreman put it: "This could be a problem that actually gets fixed."



Food Safety Administrator Michael R. Taylor urges basic change.



HACCP rule includes E.coli, salmonella tests--USDA

122

WASHINGTON, March 13 (Reuter) - Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Wednesday that upcoming rules on meat and poultry inspection would include testing both for E. coli and salmonella.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is in the last stages of preparing its final rules, known as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP), which will introduce microbial testing into federal meat inspection.

"We're going to have complete and total...inspection that will include inspection for E. coli, inspection for salmonella. We'll have a pathogen reduction system that is second to none," Glickman told CNN.

USDA said last September that the final rule would introduce testing for background levels of generic E. coli instead of the salmonella testing it had originally proposed. -- Washington Commodities Desk (202) 898-8489

REUTER

Rtr 17:55 03-13-96

:SUBJECT: GROU FDPR USA

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Received by NewsEDGE/LAN: 3/13/96 5:55 PM



Glickman-need own farm bill if no U.S. budget deal

WASHINGTON, Jan-11 (Reuter) - Congress will need to deal with agriculture separately if budget talks remain at an impasse, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Thursday.

Glickman said enactment of a new farm bill or a one-year extension of the 1990 farm law was preferable to operating the farm program under terms of the 1949 Agricultural Act, which he called "dysfunctional for the modern world."

He declined to suggest a date on which separate work on a farm bill should begin but said, "Practically speaking, weather is the deadline" -- a reference to the approach of the planting season.

Earlier this week, Glickman said he would begin on February 15 to lay out terms for crop supports under the 1949 law if there was no farm bill. The 1949 law dictates the form of U.S. farm programs whenever farm policy laws lapse.

Delegates to the American Farm Bureau Federation convention voted Wednesday to support sweeping change of U.S. farm supports along the lines of a Republican plan that was part of the budget bill vetoed by Clinton. Glickman declined to endorse the program favored by Republicans.

Glickman said he hoped his comments on the 1949 law would "move the process along" in getting a new farm bill. --3

A number of times during a news conference, Glickman said a separate farm bill or an extension of current law would be appropriate if there was no budget pact soon -- "It will have to be pulled out and dealt with separately."

Glickman has criticized the Republican plan as giving farmers windfall payments during periods of flush prices.

The Republican plan would give farmers wide discretion to choose the crops they grow and would guarantee them an annual payment through 2002. In exchange, farm spending would be reduced by one-fifth and there would be an annual limit on farm support costs.

REUTER

Rtr 12:36 01-11-96

:SUBJECT: FDPR TRAD USA

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Received by NewsEDGE/LAN: 1/11/96 12:35 PM

Glickman says Farm Economy Good, but Legislation Needed

McPHERSON, Kan. (AP) The farm economy is healthy, thanks to a bustling export market and good domestic prices, said U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman.

Glickman spoke to several hundred farmers at the annual Kansas Farmers Union meeting Friday night. He said unemployment and inflation are decreasing and prices for crops are high.

"We have the highest prices for many of the row crops that we've seen in several decades, and I think that is likely to continue," he said. "We have to work on livestock, obviously, but the trends are in the right direction for many crops."

He said farm exports, at \$58 billion, are the highest in history.

"I realize there is a lot of personal anxiety out there on the economy, but the fact of the matter is, this economy is doing a heck of a lot better than it was before (President Clinton) took office," Glickman said.

The North American Free Trade Agreement was attacked by several of the farmers in attendance, but Glickman, who voted for the trade agreement when he was a congressman from Kansas, said not all economic problems can be blamed on the agreement.

Glickman also said Congress' failure to pass a budget package could force legislators to extend current farm programs. If they don't, farm policy will be dictated by the 1949 Agriculture Adjustment Act.

"The 1949 act requires that farm allotments be based on individuals' growing histories from the 1950s," Glickman said, explaining that farmers who didn't grow wheat or feed grain then would be adversely affected.

He predicted a solution would be found before he had to use the 1949 law.

Glickman said he will begin announcing information about rice programs in the middle of February, followed by policies on other crops as needed, even without a farm bill. The farm bill has been caught in the longest delay since World War II.

Ed Werth, a Gove County farmer, said he agreed with many of the statements Glickman made, and he hopes Congress can produce a farm bill soon.

"I call it strictly politics," he said about the budget confrontation.

"I guess I'm concerned about it as much as anybody else."

(PROFILE
(CAT:Agriculture;)
(SRC:AP; ST:MO;)
)

AP-NY-01-13-96 1419EST

:SUBJECT: KS AGRI MO
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Received by NewsEDGE/LAN: 1/13/96 2:19 PM

Ag chief praises new law

See related stories, Page A-1.

By BARBARA FLECK
Democrat staff writer



Glickman

When Mad Cow Disease was identified as a possible cause for people getting sick in Britain, there was a world-wide slump in beef consumption.

A similar reaction occurred when apples treated with alar were shown to cause cancer in children in the late 1980s.

These kinds of incidents will hopefully be diluted with the repeal of the "Delaney Clause" which has regulated pesticide applications since 1950.

Secretary Dan Glickman and Congressman Vic Fazio shared their enthusiasm for the new law, designed to let farmers use potential

See GLICKMAN, back page

Glickman

Continued from Page 1

ly harmful ingredients in food, with Yolo County farmers and officials Wednesday at a special Farm Bureau meeting.

"It sets reasonable standards, gets rid of zero tolerance which was unrealistic," Glickman said.

The Delaney Clause stated that basically any pesticide found in food would make it unsafe. However, improved technology has permitted potentially harmful ingredients to be detected in amounts of near insignificance.

With the Delaney Clause gone, government regulators hope they can set reasonable standards.

Fazio said the bill will ensure all foods, fresh and processed, are consumer-safe and yet not wreak havoc on the agricultural industry.

"We were close to an incredible crisis...there were 14 pesticides ready to be delisted by Environmental Protection Agency," he said. "In the short term that would have disrupted agriculture."

Fazio said the consumer is protected because over 15 years every pesticide on the market will be reviewed and have standards set.

Fazio called it a "trade-off" created with bi-partisan cooperation.

"It balances food safety with reasonable standards," he said.

A local farmer asked if lower standards would have a world-wide affect on exports.

Glickman speculated the bill itself would not affect world trade

because it would be a "leader in good science."

Fazio said adopted standards would be based on actual exposure risks yet still allow pesticide benefits to be considered.

"Right now it's a seat-of-the pants guess (what potential pesticide risks are)," he said. "It will be deemed safe, if a reasonable tolerance is established."

Exceptions to the one-in-a-million risk limitation would be allowed if "significant and irreplaceable advantages" were displayed.

Fazio noted the UCD integrated pest management research center recently approved will help increase consumer confidence.

"It's easy to destroy the public's confidence," he said. "But (research centers) will be the solution to future issues."

He said the law should be developed by January and effects from it seen throughout 1997.

He also noted dual-registration could possibly be eliminated by setting federal standards that are acceptable to states.

"We will also expedite replacement of pesticides with safer pesticides, hopefully with non-political solution," he said.

Fazio has spent the last four years working on the bill. Last month the new bill was approved by the House and Senate and signed into law by President Clinton.

Wichita (KS) Eagle
March 20, 1998

Spray kills salmonella, cuts meat safety risk

■ 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

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

A recent study showed that 16 percent of chickens carry the salmonella bacteria, down from about 35 percent a decade ago. Along with poultry processors, consumers have shouldered much of the anti-salmonella battle, with warnings to adequately cook poultry to kill any bacteria, and to wash all utensils that come in contact with raw poultry.

Those warnings won't change, Glickman said at the National Poultry Club.

"This is a major milestone for food safety," he said. "But I do want to make clear that proper processing and safe in-kitchen preparation remain essential."

Weather permitting, Glickman will be in Wichita today. At Lincoln Elementary School, he will highlight USDA's school breakfast program. And at 9 a.m. he is scheduled to deliver the keynote address at the Governor's Kansas State Agriculture Conference at the Hyatt.

Tom Webb reports on the Kansas congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. He may be reached at (202) 605-6055.

See SALMONELLA, Page 9A

2/9/42 (Item 2 from file: 641)
DIALOG(R)File 641:Rocky Mtn News
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09233060

**TAINED MEAT RECALL TO BE PUT ON INTERNET LIST CAN'T ID RESTAURANTS
WHERE
THE FOOD IS SERVED**

Rocky Mountain News (RM) - Thursday, August 21, 1997

By: Elliot Jaspin and Scott Montgomery Cox News Service

Edition: Final Section: News/National/International Page: 2A

Word Count: 281

MEMO:

The Agriculture Department's Web site is: www.usda.gov.

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Agriculture Department said Wednesday it will change its policy of not alerting the public when tainted beef and poultry are recalled from restaurants.

Department officials said they will begin immediately to post all recalls of contaminated beef and poultry on the Internet, and also will send the report to about 200 private organizations on a weekly department mailing list.

The Internet listings will be of little use to consumers because they will only show the name of the food supplier, but not the restaurants where the food was sent.

Thomas J. Billy, administrator of the department's Food Safety and Inspection Service, said, however, that the issue of how best to include names of restaurants will be further considered in a series of public hearings.

Billy said the review is at the urging of Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman and Undersecretary Catherine Woteki, who manages food safety issues.

The change comes in response to stories this week by Cox Newspapers that revealed the department's policy of exempting restaurant food from public notifications of recalls.

Noting that the department relies on the cooperation of the industry because the recall process is voluntary, Billy said the hearings will include industry representatives and government officials, as well as the

public.

Tom Amontree, department spokesman, predicted a policy change. I believe . . . once product is verified that (it) went to a restaurant, I'm sure that information is going to be made public."

Government records show that, without telling the public, the department recalled more than 1 million pounds of possibly contaminated meat and poultry sent to restaurants and fast-food franchises the past three years.

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2/9/44 (Item 2 from file: 642)
DIALOG(R)File 642: The Charlotte Observer
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09234094

BURGER RECALL AT 25 MILLION POUNDS; BEEF PLANT CLOSED

Charlotte Observer (CO) - Friday, August 22, 1997

By: RICK WEISS and CAROLINE MAYER, Washington Post

Edition: ONE\3 Section: MAIN NEWS Page: 1A

Word Count: 809

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - A meat-processing company under federal investigation for its distribution of tainted hamburgers is shutting down its Nebraska beef-processing facility indefinitely and recalling all burgers shipped from the plant, about 25 million pounds, officials announced Thursday.

The nationwide recall, largest of its kind by far in U.S. history, was a nonnegotiable" recommendation from the government, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said.

It was put to the plant's owner, Hudson Foods Inc. of Rogers, Ark., after federal inspectors uncovered evidence that the company's meat processing, bacterial testing and bookkeeping procedures were inadequate to assure that its products were safe.

Enough new information has come to light so we are ready to take action," Glickman said at a hastily called news conference.

The move expands on a recall of 1.2 million pounds of hamburger at the same plant announced last Friday. That recall was ordered after federal investigators determined that Hudson hamburgers produced during three days in June had caused 16 cases of food poisoning in Colorado.

The company's burgers are carried by such national chains as Burger King, Wal-Mart, Boston Market and Sam's Club.

In a statement released Thursday, Hudson Foods said it was closing the plant and initiating the recall out of an abundance of caution and to restore the public confidence."

Undersecretary for Food Safety Cathie Woteki urged consumers to check their freezers for any Hudson Foods frozen hamburgers and return them to the place of purchase.

Burger King announced it would immediately pull all Hudson products from

its restaurants. About 25 percent of Burger King outlets carry Hudson beef products, and some of those restaurants may experience temporary shortages of burgers, the company said in a statement.

Boston Market ordered Hudson patties pulled from all of its 1,200 stores. The patties will be out of our stores within the next 15 minutes," said Jeff Beckman, Boston Market's public relations director, just an hour after the 2:30 p.m. news conference.

Beckman said 40 percent of its stores used Hudson beef from the Columbus, Neb., plant to make meat loaf. For a time, he said, meat loaf will not be available at the affected stores.

A Safeway spokeswoman in Oakland, Calif., said only one division - the Denver stores - did business with Hudson Foods and it removed all of the company's beef from its stores.

Warehouse stores, including Cosco Wholesale (formerly called Price Club) and BJ's Warehouse, also said they did not stock Hudson's beef patties. However, the patties had been carried by Sam's Club, a division of Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart spokeswoman Betsy Reithemeyer said Wal-Mart officials pulled all Hudson ground beef off counter shelves last week.

Glickman said the department was moved to recommend closure of the Nebraska plant and a total recall after inspectors learned that the company had a practice of saving leftover raw meat from one day's operations and adding it to batches of raw meat used to make burgers the next day.

That method makes it increasingly difficult with each day to keep track of whether any leftovers from a contaminated batch have made their way into subsequent batches.

The problem was exacerbated by inadequate bookkeeping for tracking various lots of beef, said Thomas Billy, administrator of the department's Food Safety and Inspection Service. Billy said the agency also was concerned that the company's testing for bacterial contamination has been inadequate.

A separate investigation for possible criminal activity is still under way, said USDA Inspector General Roger Viadero.

That investigation was initiated after a USDA audit last week determined that the company's initial estimate of the amount of meat that may have been contaminated in June was short by more than a million pounds.

Billy said the department was now fairly certain that the contamination,

caused by a potentially deadly bacterium called E. coli O157:H7, originated in raw meat provided to Hudson from one of seven suppliers.

When the supplier is identified definitively, he said, investigators will follow up to see if that company also shipped contaminated products to other processing facilities.

That investigation could lead to additional recalls, officials said.

Billy said Colorado public-health officials and scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta are looking into new cases of E. coli poisoning in two Colorado families who recently fell ill after eating hamburgers produced at the Hudson plant June 16.

If DNA fingerprinting studies show a match between the disease-causing bacteria in those people and bacteria in hamburgers saved from the families' freezers, then the scope of contamination from the Hudson plant would be larger than previously recognized. The 16 cases that have been linked so far to Hudson were all tied to burgers produced earlier in the month.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Those wanting information can call the USDA hot line at 1-800-535-4555 or Hudson's hot line at 1-800-447-2670.

2/9/1 (Item 1 from file: 433)
DIALOG(R)File 433:Charleston Newspapers
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01543348

Congress to examine bad-food recall power
Charleston Daily Mail, P 4C
August 29, 1997

JOURNAL CODE: CTG RECORD TYPE: FULLTEXT SECTION HEADING: News.

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - Members of Congress could have a bill waiting on their legislative menu when they return next week that would allow the agriculture secretary to recall contaminated meat and other foods.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman is pushing for such authority after an E. coli outbreak forced Hudson Foods Inc. to recall 25 million pounds of ground beef.

Although Glickman and the USDA can send out warnings about contaminated foods, they cannot recall the products - only the company can. Now, Glickman is pitching a proposal that would grant him recall power.

(c) 1997 Charleston Daily Mail
COMPANY NAMES (Dialog Generated): Hudson Foods Inc
DESCRIPTORS: national; government; agriculture; food; toxic; hazardous;
agency

2/9/61 (Item 3 from file: 713)
DIALOG(R)File 713:Atlanta J/Const.
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09240067

NEW AGRICULTURE CHIEF PUTS STAMP OF QUIET COMPETENCE ON AGENCY
QUICK ACTION
ON TAINTED BEEF OUTBREAK REASSURES PUBLIC, IMPRESSES TOUGH
AUDIENCE IN
GOVERNMENT.

Atlanta Constitution JOURNAL (AC JOURNAL) - Thursday, August 28, 1997

By: Julia Malone WASHINGTON BUREAU

Section: NATIONAL NEWS Page: B/(CONSTITUTION): 04

Word Count: 639

TEXT:

Washington ---U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman has quietly steered his giant department out of the gift scandal that plagued his more flamboyant predecessor, Mike Espy.

But the discovery of tainted beef in a Hudson Foods meatpacking plant has catapulted the low-key Glickman, 52, into public view and highlighted his two-year tenure.

Glickman, known for almost two decades as a serious-minded Kansas lawmaker, flexed the full powers of his office last week as he closed down Hudson's Columbus, Neb., meat plant and recalled all the beef it had produced since June 5, a total of 25 million pounds of meat.

He moved with speed and certainty that has marked his leadership at USDA. "When he has the latitude, he's a very decisive man," said James Webster, a former Agriculture Department official who publishes a newsletter on farm issues and gives Glickman generally high marks as a "very able performer" within the limits placed on him by the Clinton White House.

Webster suggested that Glickman might, in fact, have moved too hastily in ordering the biggest meat recall almost immediately after receiving a report raising questions about the meat plant's food safety procedures.

"Maybe he would have profited by waiting half a day," Webster said. Even so, the farm policy expert acknowledged that consumers have applauded the quick move, and meat producers dare not criticize it.

"They don't want to be seen as promoting dirty meat," he said.

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman

Born: November 24, 1944, in Wichita, Kan.

Career: Lawyer, president of Wichita Board of Education, elected Democratic member of the U.S. Congress in 1976. Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee 1992-94. Defeated for re-election to House in 1994. Confirmed as agriculture secretary, March 1995.

Family: Wife, Rhoda, and an adult son and daughter.

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2/9/10 (Item 4 from file: 471)
DIALOG(R)File 471:New York Times Fulltext-90 Day
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03714361 826030970828

Food Safety's Waiting Weapon

Richard Rhodes; Richard Rhodes is the author of "Deadly Feasts: Tracking the Secrets of a Terrifying New Plague" and "The Making of the Atomic Bomb."

New York Times, Late Edition - Final ED, COL 01, P 31

Thursday August 28 1997

DOCUMENT TYPE: Newspaper; Op-Ed JOURNAL CODE: NYT LANGUAGE: English

RECORD TYPE: Fulltext SECTION HEADING: SECTA

Word Count: 754

ABSTRACT:

Richard Rhodes Op-Ed article contends that food irradiation would have prevented illnesses caused recently by contaminated hamburger from Hudson Foods; maintains that irradiation is safe, but many Americans fear it because it uses radioactivity to kill noxious bacteria and parasites in food; drawing (M)

TEXT:

MADISON, Conn. - It's a good rule of thumb that technological solutions work better than increased regulation. Before 1920, thousands of babies died annually in New York and other large American cities from drinking contaminated milk. The solution wasn't more Federal dairy inspectors or a merger of Government agencies. It was pasteurization.

The solution to the problem of food poisoning -- whether the food involved is hamburger, strawberries, raspberries, cider or some other product susceptible to bacterial contamination -- has been sitting on the shelf for most of 40 years while hundreds of thousands of Americans have been sickened and thousands have died. It is the equivalent of pasteurization, and its neglect is a disgrace.

The technology is food irradiation. The Army pioneered its development beginning in 1943, and it has since passed into commercial application in some 40 countries, including limited use in the United States.

Irradiation uses gamma rays from a solid radioactive source to disrupt the DNA of, and thus to kill, noxious bacteria, parasites, mold and fungus in and on agricultural products. Gamma rays are similar to microwaves and X-rays.

Irradiation doesn't make food radioactive, nor does it noticeably change taste, texture or appearance. Depending on dose and on whether the food is packaged to prevent recontamination, irradiation can retard spoilage, kill germs or even completely preserve. The World Health

better educate the public on how to prepare food properly, but we can't all become sterile technicians at home. Thermometers won't protect us from E. coli-contaminated alfalfa sprouts.

Public health has been a primary responsibility of Government for more than a century. Inspection and testing alone, however responsibly applied, can never assure consumer safety where invisible pathogens are concerned.

Pasteurization saved the babies. Irradiation can save our food.

CAPTIONS: Drawing. (Michael Bartalos)

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COMPANY NAMES: Hudson Foods

DESCRIPTORS: Food Contamination and Poisoning; Irradiation of Food; Meat; Bacteria; Parasites

PERSONAL NAMES: Rhodes, Richard

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Omaha World-Herald

August 23, 1997, Saturday SUNRISE EDITION

SECTION: EDITORIAL; Pg. 14

LENGTH: 535 words

HEADLINE: Even an Up-to-Date Food Plant Must Employ Tighter Controls

BODY:

The Columbus, Neb., meat-processing plant owned by Hudson Foods Inc. seems an unlikely candidate for a tainted-food incident. But 25 million pounds of frozen hamburger patties shipped by the plant are being recalled by the federal government because of the possibility that it has been contaminated by the E. coli bacteria.

Only 2 1/2 years old, the facility appears state-of-the-art. Its work areas resemble the surgical wing of a hospital, with bright lights and stainless steel fixtures. Workers wear head coverings, masks, white coats and gloves and wash their boots as they enter. Employees who don't follow hand-washing rules are reprimanded.

The meat is handled by automated equipment. Two of the three shifts each day for production, an employee said. The third is strictly for cleaning work as and equipment.

But even such a facility finds itself the subject of by far the largest food recall in history. This illustrates the insidious nature of food-borne illnesses - and the need for government and industry to be even more vigilant.

It hasn't been proved that contamination exists in all the patties that are being recalled. But the strain of the E. coli bacterium that made 20 people in Colorado sick from eating Hudson beef is too dangerous to take chances.

Government inspectors theorize that the bacteria entered the Columbus plant in beef from a supplier. The government refused to make public the names of the seven suppliers.

Hudson, despite its shiny processing areas and its rules of cleanliness, made things harder on itself. Government inspectors discovered that the company saved meat patties that were improperly formed on one day and recycled the meat in the next day's run. For that reason, there could be no assurance that the contamination hadn't spread from one day's production to the next.

Hudson's records were of little help, the government said. Records weren't sufficiently detailed to trace specific quantities of meat through the production process. In addition, the inspectors said, Hudson's E. coli tests weren't conducted as often as they should have been.

That's why the U.S. secretary of agriculture, Dan Glickman of Kansas, said was necessary to recall all the meat shipped from the Columbus plant this summer. The bacteria were present in meat that was processed June 5. Written records kept at the Columbus plant could provide no assurance that the

LEVEL 1 - 42 OF 44 STORIES

Copyright 1997 Arkansas Democrat-Gazette
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

August 24, 1997, Sunday

SECTION: BUSINESS; Pg. NWBM

LENGTH: 952 words

HEADLINE: Hudson faced with disinfecting tainted image

BYLINE: Susan Scantlin, ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

BODY:

More than 25 million pounds of frozen ground beef patties acted as a temporary anchor attached to Hudson Foods Inc. stock last week. The nightmare that haunts corporate dreams became front-page reality when product from the company's Columbus, Neb., plant was linked to 16 cases of E. coli contamination in Colorado.

Hudson recalled 20,000 pounds of the frozen patties Aug. 12 as customers such as Burger King and Wal-Mart began purging their freezer cases of the company's beef products that could be associated with the recall. The patty problem began to snowball as new lots of possibly contaminated beef were added to the list.

By the ides of August, the U.S. Department of Agriculture declared it the largest recall of U.S. ground beef products in history, and national media attention was fixed on Hudson Foods' corporate offices in Rogers. The day before the recalled poundage reached the million mark, Hudson's president and chief executive officer, Michael T. Hudson, issued a statement defending the company's course of action in responding to the possible contamination.

"Hudson Foods acted immediately and voluntarily in cooperation with the USDA, recalling the frozen beef patties suspected of being associated with E. coli 0157:H7. Our first objective as a company is to produce healthy and wholesome food products. All of our actions in carrying out this recall have been directed toward achieving that goal," Hudson's statement said.

The USDA review will focus on the company's efforts to quickly call in all of the suspect beef processed at the Nebraska facility on June 4, 5 and 9. The outcome of the USDA report will critically affect Hudson's efforts to restore public confidence in the safety of its products.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman intends to make Hudson the food safety bad-actor poster boy while using the company as an example of the agency's need for more inspectors. Glickman said dispatching the "SWAT team" to the Nebraska plant was meant to "send a signal throughout the industry that we will not tolerate practices which are ... incompatible with public health."

As company founder James "Red" Hudson stepped to the media forefront to assure the public the company was cooperating fully with the USDA in locating the source of the contamination, Glickman was raising the question of whether this was an aberration or a "serious systemic breach of compliance."

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, August 24, 1997

as rural America. Poultry and trucking dominate the list of public companies
in a Northwest Arkansas corporate address, but there are signs of
diversification in the region's portfolio.

The recent emergence of StaffMark is evidence this area still breeds bulls
for the stock market. These companies are more than trading symbols; they are an
integral part of why many of us call this home.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: August 29, 1997

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, August 24, 1997

The test is easy to use. A sample of fluid from meat or produce is placed in a plastic well. Within a few minutes a color appears indicating whether dangerous E. coli strains are present in the sample.

Meridian will begin marketing the new test in about two weeks, Motto said.

About 9,000 people in the United States will die from bacteria in food this year, according to estimates from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

UA Robot Rolls

To Third Place

Researchers in the University of Arkansas' computer science department have programmed a robot to think for itself. "Razorbot," a small, red, three-wheeled robot, took third place recently in an international competition inspired by the Mars Pathfinder mission.

The robot relays information from an on-board video camera and sonar system to a computer that determines the robot's route and helps it detect objects in its path, such as walls or rocks.

"It's a complex system that uses a few different sensors to determine how to move," said Douglas Blank, a doctoral student who programmed the robot's behaviors. "It uses sonar to avoid obstacles, and it uses the video to decide the way to move."

About a dozen universities entered the "Find Life On Mars" International Competition for Artificial Intelligence held last month in Providence, R.I. The objective was for robots to identify and remove different-colored balls amid a rocky terrain.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: August 29, 1997

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, August 28, 1997

"I'm not sure I'm willing to turn the authority to levy civil fines over to person," said Sen. Dale Bumpers, D-Ark. "That's such a judgmental thing. Nobody could levy a fine that could bankrupt a company and the fine might turn out to be totally unjustified."

However, Bumpers said he would consider supporting a bill expanding Glickman's authority to deal with repeat violators. In those cases, the authority to order recalls and close plants may prove beneficial, Bumpers said.

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 meat processor to issue a recall because all meat must be approved by the USDA before it is sold.

"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," Bumpers said.

The Hudson recall grew from 20,000 pounds on Aug. 12 to 25 million pounds Aug. 21. Since the initial recall, Bumpers said he has twice spoken with Hudson chairman and founder 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."

Despite new preventive measures designed to better identify food contamination, Bumpers said it would be nearly impossible to keep harmful microbes out of meat. Any beef-processing facility in the country could easily be facing the same dilemma Hudson Foods is facing, Bumpers said.

"It's such an arbitrary thing," he said. "This could happen to anybody on any given day."

The Clinton administration has twice tried to get Congress to expand Glickman's authority. Both proposals, which were defeated in Congress, called for civil penalties of up to \$ 100,000 a day, recall authority, and discretion to deny meat inspection to repeat offenders.

"I'm hopeful that the third time's the charm," Glickman said at an Aug. 21 recall in which he announced that Hudson had issued the recall and shut down its Columbus, Neb., processing plant.

"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," Glickman said.

Although he believes the USDA has treated Hudson Foods unfairly, Hutchinson said he would keep an open mind when examining Glickman's proposal.

"If he can point to some cases where it has been a roadblock in protecting public health, then we should certainly examine that," Hutchinson said. "But I'm not aware of any instances in which public health has been jeopardized because of lack of authority."

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August 29, 1997, Friday SUNRISE EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 411 words

HEADLINE: USDA to Ask For Authority On Recalls Dan Glickman wants his agency to hold new powers on tainted meat and poultry

SOURCE: THE KNIGHT-RIDDER WASHINGTON BUREAU

DATELINE: Washington

BODY:

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman today will ask for the power to demand recalls of potentially dangerous meat and poultry, along with added powers to fine violators.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has previously sought greater authority to keep tainted food off the nation's tables, but Congress has been unwilling to give bureaucrats that authority over private industry.

The problems Glickman faces were spotlighted last week by his involvement in largest meat recall in U.S. history, pressuring Hudson Foods to pull back some 25 million pounds of potentially tainted ground beef. Glickman threatened to withdraw federal inspectors from the plant, and Hudson Foods voluntarily complied with the recall.

"I think most folks would be shocked to know that industry - and not the federal food-safety experts - ultimately make the decision as to whether or not food is recalled when the public's safety is compromised," Glickman said last week.

Glickman's predecessor, Mike Espy, sought similar authority in 1993, but his effort failed.

Glickman's legislative package is not likely to get an enthusiastic welcome among congressional Republicans this time, either.

"I really don't believe members will be very impressed with what is being requested," a top House Agriculture Committee aide said Thursday.

"The Hudson case is case in point of why they don't need it. They closed their plant when they were asked to close their plant. Hudson lost a lot more when they lost the Burger King contract than they would under civil penalties."

Every year, 37 million beef carcasses are processed in the United States, including 7 billion pounds of hamburger. The incidence of E. coli found on beef carcasses is 0.2 percent, according to the American Meat Institute, a trade group.

LEVEL 1 - 35 OF 44 STORIES

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

August 29, 1997, Friday METRO EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1

LENGTH: 537 words

HEADLINE: Meat Scare Sparks Call To Congress Hudson Beef recall prompts agriculture secretary to press for tougher federal laws

BYLINE: JAKE THOMPSON

SOURCE: WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

DATELINE: Washington

BODY:

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman sent legislation to Congress Friday seeking to boost federal powers for meat and poultry recalls, to impose fines and more quickly force troubled plants to shut down.

Glickman said he needed the authority so the Agriculture Department could move swiftly to protect public health. He said he was prompted by the recent recall of 25 million pounds of beef patties processed by the Hudson Foods plant in Columbus, Neb.

"Every minute we wait is another minute a person could become ill or worse," Glickman said at a press conference announcing details of the bill. "That's something that weighs very heavily on our minds every time we deal with an outbreak."

Glickman seeks fines of up to \$ 100,000 to impose on beef and poultry slaughter or processing plants. There are about 6,500 such plants in the country. He also seeks power to order recalls. Now the federal agency can only recommend that a company comply with a recall request.

Congress may cast a dim eye on Glickman's proposal, although he said he would be working with several key senators, among them Democratic Sens. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska and Tom Harkin of Iowa in trying to build support.

A meat-industry group criticized the proposal Friday as unneeded.

The USDA and U.S. Food and Drug Administration already have all the power they need to ensure that food is recalled, said Dane Bernard, a vice president of the National Food Processors Association.

Last week Glickman asked the Hudson Foods plant to shut down and recall all hamburger it potentially had on the marketplace after more than a dozen people in Colorado suffered E. coli-bacteria-related diarrhea, nausea and cramps.

He said Friday that he thought that public worry about food safety might help win passage of the increased authority.

Copyright 1997 The Detroit News, Inc.
The Detroit News

August 29, 1997, Friday

SECTION: Metro; Pg. Pg. D1

LENGTH: 304 words

HEADLINE: U.S. starts removing tainted frozen strawberries from schools

BYLINE: By Richard A. Ryan / Detroit News Senior Washington Correspondent

BODY:

WASHINGTON -- Federal authorities today will begin removing more than 10 tons of contaminated frozen strawberries from Michigan schools because of concerns they could be accidentally served.

The berries have been stored in 700 thirty-pound buckets in 100 state schools and food distribution centers since an outbreak of hepatitis A among school children last spring.

The berries were kept because they might be used as potential evidence in the case against the distributor that brought them to Michigan.

"We are just glad to get rid of them," said Gary Kelley, assistant school superintendent in Genesee County's Davison schools, which have some of the strawberries. "It's ridiculous that it's taken so long."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's decision to isolate the strawberries to a central warehouse in Grand Rapids follows its order this month to recall a record 25-million pounds of possibly tainted hamburger produced by a plant in Nebraska. The Clinton administration has said it wants to quickly eliminate potential public health threats posed by foods.

"This is what should have happened many months ago," said Bobby Pestronk, director of the health department in Genesee County. "Our concern was the longer they stayed in the freezer the greater the chance of an accidental serving. Those berries were an accident waiting to happen."

The berries were grown in Mexico and shipped to Michigan by a San Diego distributor. It is illegal to use foreign grown products in school lunches.

Sen. Spencer Abraham, R-Auburn Hills, convinced Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman that the berries continued to pose a health risk and the USDA agreed to move them to a central locations.

"My feeling was let's get them out of the schools and then worry about what happens after that," Abraham said.

LOTT-DATE: August 29, 1997

LEVEL 1 - 32

ORIES

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THE KANSASy Star Co.
STAR

August 29, 1997 Friday

POLITAN EDITION

SECTION: NATIONAL/WORLD; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 625 words

HEADLINE: Glickman to request new power
Agriculture secretary wants to be able to order recalls of meat, poultry.

BYLINE: TOM WEBB; JAMES KUHNHENN, Washington Correspondents

BODY:

WASHINGTON - The E. coli scare is about to land in the lap of Congress.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman will ask today for the power to demand recalls of potentially dangerous meat and poultry, along with added powers to fine violators.

The Agriculture Department previously sought greater authority to keep tainted food off American tables, but Congress has been unwilling to give bureaucrats greater authority over private industry. And public attention turns elsewhere after each outbreak from the headlines.

The problems Glickman faces were spotlighted last week when he prompted the largest meat recall in U.S. history, pressuring Hudson Foods to pull back some 25 million pounds of potentially tainted ground beef.

Glickman threatened to withdraw federal inspectors from Hudson's plant, and Hudson voluntarily complied with Glickman's request.

"I think that most folks would be shocked to know that industry - and not the federal food safety experts - ultimately makes the decision as to whether or not food is recalled when the public's safety is compromised," Glickman said last week.

Glickman's predecessor, Mike Espy, sought similar authority in 1993, but his effort fizzled. Instead, the department pushed ahead with regulatory changes that wouldn't need congressional approval.

Even those changes had to be toned down after Congress threatened to block the overhaul in the 1996 spending bill for the department.

Glickman's legislative package probably won't get an enthusiastic welcome among congressional Republicans this time, either.

"I really don't believe members will be very impressed with what being requested," a top House Agriculture Committee aide said Thursday.

LEVEL 1 - 24

ORIES

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August 30, 1997, Saturday, SOONER EDITION

SECTION: NATIONAL, Pg. A-7

LENGTH: 615 words

HEADLINE: U.S. WANTS POWER TO RECALL TAINTED MEAT, FINE VIOLATORS

BYLINE: CHARLES ABBOTT, REUTERS NEWS SERVICE

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

The Clinton administration, acting one week after a record U.S. meat recall, asked Congress yesterday for the power to order a recall of tainted meat and to fine companies that break the law.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said the proposed legislation also would expand the department's ability to deny meat inspection to plants with willful or repeated violations.

"These enforcement tools are critical," Glickman said at a news conference. The department has made similar requests in the past.

Michael Friedman, acting commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, said a companion bill would be filed, possibly next week, to give FDA recall and civil penalty powers for the rest of the U.S. food supply.

"We . . . think there should be consistency," Friedman said. "This properly is seen as a mosaic" of food safety rules.

At present, recalls are voluntary and usually are negotiated by the government with foodmakers. Glickman said he needed a varied arsenal of tools to work with firms other than the sole "atomic bomb authority" of threatening to pull meat inspectors out of a plant. Meat cannot be sold across state lines unless federally inspected.

The meat-safety bill will be given to Congress when it returns next week from summer recess. Several lawmakers were interested in sponsoring it. Nonetheless, department officials declined to speculate on odds of passage this year.

In Edgartown, Mass., where President Clinton is on vacation, spokesman Joe Lockhart said the administration had twice sought the extra powers - once in a bill and once in a position paper - and that this would be a "top priority" when Congress returns next week.

"We're going to have this legislation ready to be introduced and ask them to quickly. I think the events of the last couple of weeks are a case study why the secretary should have this power," Lockhart said.

But food-industry groups oppose the meat bill. The Grocery Manufacturers of America said the government was "promoting food fear" when it should do a

LEVEL 1 - 25 OF 44 STORIES

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

August 30, 1997, Saturday

SECTION: NEWS; Ed. 1,2,3,4,6,7; Pg. A-1

LENGTH: 716 words

HEADLINE: New weapons in tainted-food fight;
Agriculture secretary seeks the power to order recalls

SOURCE: NEW YORK TIMES NEWS SERVICE

BYLINE: Michael Janofsky

BODY:

One week after the biggest meat recall in the nation's history, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman yesterday proposed legislation that would broadly strengthen his department's powers over companies found to have produced tainted meat and poultry.

The measure, which Glickman said would be introduced when Congress returned next week from recess, would give the Agriculture Department authority to order the recall of a contaminated product. The department can now only try to urge a company to recall a product voluntarily.

The proposal would give the department authority to impose fines, of up to \$100,000 a day, against a company that violates any provision of the legislation. It would also make it easier for the department to withdraw federal inspectors from plants, effectively closing them.

A companion bill, giving the Food and Drug Administration the same powers over the rest of the United States food supply, is also expected.

"These enforcement tools are critical," Glickman said at a news conference. "They will ensure a rapid response throughout the commercial food chain, from plants, processors, retailers and restaurants.

"We don't have time for a snail's pace procedure to stop a plant's production until they clean up their act. Once the experts make the determination that these steps are necessary, we need to move quickly."

Glickman, a former representative from Kansas, is not the first agriculture secretary to propose added powers for the department, which regulates the nation's food supply. And like others before him, he is facing a battle against powerful lobbying forces in Washington and influential lawmakers from meat-producing states, who oppose increased government intervention.

That combination helped defeat similar efforts for new authority for the department as recently as 1994 and 1995. Bills in those years were introduced after an outbreak of E. coli bacteria in hamburgers sold in 1993 by Jack in the Box restaurants in the Northwest. Four children died, and hundreds of other people became sick.

LEVEL 1 - 22 OF 44 STORIES

Copyright 1997 The Omaha World-Herald Company
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August 30, 1997, Saturday SUNRISE EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 10

LENGTH: 578 words

HEADLINE: Glickman Emphasizes Need For Beefing Up Recall Power

BYLINE: JAKE THOMPSON

SOURCE: WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

DATELINE: Washington

BODY:

Congress turned a deaf ear twice before.

But then along came an E. coli scare, Hudson Foods' massive hamburger recall and the shutdown of the Nebraska plant that produced the possibly tainted meat.

So Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman on Friday proposed new powers he's seeking to tackle future problems in the meat and poultry industry.

"I think the dynamics have changed," Glickman said at a press conference.

He outlined a three-point proposal: power for the agriculture secretary to order meat and poultry recalls; new civil fines up to \$ 100,000; and authority to pull federal meat inspectors out of problem plants, which would shut them down more quickly.

The American Meat Institute, representing the meat and poultry industry, quickly criticized Glickman's proposal as unneeded and a waste of taxpayer dollars.

The Safe Tables Our Priority organization, a group that arose after a 1993 E. coli outbreak killed four and sickened several hundred in the Pacific Northwest, said he had not gone far enough.

Glickman said he'd seek support from key farm-state lawmakers such as Sens. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska and Tom Harkin of Iowa, both Democrats.

Sen. Patrick Leahy, the highest ranking Democrat on the Senate Agriculture Committee, said Friday he will be working with the Agriculture Department on its proposed new powers.

The government now can only request meat and poultry recalls. If a company refuses or is violating other safety or record-keeping rules, the agriculture secretary's only weapon is to withdraw federal meat inspectors from a plant, by shutting it down.

"I have the atomic bomb and nothing else," Glickman said. "My sense is that the vast majority of people have no idea industry, and not federal food-safety

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News & Record (Greensboro, NC)

August 30, 1997, Saturday, ALL EDITIONS

SECTION: GENERAL NEWS, Pg. A5

LENGTH: 354 words

HEADLINE: AG SECRETARY, FDA SEEK RECALL AUTHORITY

BYLINE: The Associated Press

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:
Officials say they need more authority to prevent tainted food from reaching the public's dinner tables.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman is seeking broader authority to recall tainted meat and to fine plants that violate food safety laws.

On the heels of an E. coli outbreak that forced a massive recall of ground beef, Glickman proposed legislation Friday that would allow \$ 100,000 civil fines and improve his agency's ability to shut down plants that willfully or repeatedly violate meat safety laws.

The safety of other foods is overseen by the Food and Drug Administration, which said it will seek the same new powers from Congress.

"They're a persuasive incentive to do things safely from the start, to be extra careful to avoid the high-risk practices that trigger these actions," Glickman said of his proposals.

The Agriculture Department, which oversees the safety of beef, pork and poultry, cannot order recalls under current law. Instead, it can send out contaminated-food warnings and work with private companies to encourage recalls.

The agency also can close plants by withdrawing its inspectors. But Glickman said that current "atomic bomb authority" does not allow for varying degrees of oversight.

"If the only power I have is to shut down a plant, then it will be much more difficult for me - or really for them - to work through the gradations of food safety problems that may exist at a plant," he said.

Several industry groups were quick to criticize the proposals, saying the government already has a wide range of enforcement tools, from detaining products and preventing shipments to seeking criminal penalties.

"The current system has been effective in accomplishing this for decades," Dane Bernard of the National Food Processors Association.

LEVEL 1 - 17 OF 44 STORIES

Copyright 1997 The Kansas City Star Co.
THE KANSAS CITY STAR

August 30, 1997 Saturday METROPOLITAN EDITION

SECTION: NATIONAL/WORLD; Pg. A1

LENGTH: 1379 words

HEADLINE: Food safety: A duty for everyone
Producers, retailers, consumers encourage others to be more careful.

BYLINE: JEAN BUCHANAN; FINN BULLERS, Staff Writers

BODY:

There was a time when Chris and Bill Pannbacker didn't complain if the hamburger they were served was a little pink.

But that was before a 1993 E. coli outbreak in the Northwest.

Now the Pannbackers, who raise cattle in north-central Kansas, send those pink-in-the-middle burgers back to the kitchen.

"And sometimes we call for the manager and say, 'We don't appreciate our product going out in an unsafe manner,' " Bill Pannbacker said.

The farm couple from Washington, Kan., reflects the reaction of many livestock producers to the latest scare over the safety of the nation's food supply.

It's a matter of proper food preparation, not production problems, they say. Too many people have the unrealistic notion that food can be delivered to supermarkets germ-free, and they don't understand how to prepare meat to make sure it's safe, producers say.

Others say industry must be responsible, too.

"The price of making a minor mistake shouldn't be death," said Heather Klinkhamer of the advocacy group Safe Tables Our Priority.

Sixteen persons in Colorado became ill after eating meat traced to a Hudson Foods plant in Columbus, Neb. Because the company could not pinpoint exactly when the hamburger patties were made, it was forced to recall 25 million pounds of hamburger, the largest meat recall in U.S. history.

And Friday, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman asked Congress to expand his powers so he could demand recalls and fine violators.

In the dismay of the cattle industry, the outbreak captured lots of media attention, including this week's cover of Newsweek, featuring a package of ground chuck and the headline: "Can this meat kill you? The E. coli threat - It's worse than you think."

LEVEL 1 - 18 OF 44 STORIES

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THE KANSAS CITY STAR

August 30, 1997 Saturday METROPOLITAN EDITION

SECTION: NATIONAL/WORLD; Pg. A21

LENGTH: 362 words

HEADLINE: Glickman unveils plan to strengthen his recall authority

BYLINE: JAMES KUHNHENN, Washington Correspondent

BODY:

WASHINGTON - A week after the biggest recall of ground beef in U.S. history, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman on Friday asked Congress for unprecedented powers to single-handedly halt the distribution of tainted meat.

"We don't have time for a snail's-pace procedure to stop a plant's production until they clean up their act," Glickman said in unveiling his legislative package.

A spokesman for President Clinton said Friday the administration intended to make passage of the legislation a top priority.

Consumer groups praised the effort, but meat packers and processors criticized it as unnecessarily punitive.

In addition to seeking authority to recall contaminated meat, Glickman wants to make it easier for the Agriculture Department to withdraw federal meat inspectors from processing plants that willfully or repeatedly violate food safety laws. Without inspectors, a plant must essentially shut down.

Moreover, Glickman wants to be able to impose up to \$ 100,000 in civil fines on processing plants, supermarkets, restaurants and other food handlers that do not comply with food safety rules.

The new powers would affect both meat and poultry handlers. The Food and Drug Administration, which has jurisdiction over seafood and other perishable foods, said Friday it would ask for powers similar to those sought by Glickman.

Currently, the Agriculture Department cannot force a company to recall bad meat - it can only ask. It also can seek only criminal penalties against processors, not civil fines for violations that don't amount to criminal behavior.

The American Meat Institute, a trade group, blasted the proposals, saying the Agriculture Department already had enforcement power through its ability to shut down plants by withdrawing inspectors.

"I believe that what we're going to see after this review is ... once product is verified that (it) went to a restaurant, I'm sure that information is going to be made public," he said.

The change comes in response to stories this week by Cox Newspapers that revealed the department's policy of exempting restaurant food from public notifications of recalls.

Government records show that, without telling the public, the department recalled more than 1 million pounds of possibly contaminated meat and poultry that had been sent to restaurants and fast-food franchises over the past three years.

Although details of all recalls were not available, records show that in the latest case, involving 1,400 pounds of hamburger in Spokane, Wash., most of the contaminated food was eaten before it could be recalled. No illnesses were reported.

The Agriculture Department's Web address is: www.usda.gov.
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**DESCRIPTORS: US; DEPARTMENT; AGRICULTURE; RESTAURANT; FOOD HEALTH;
INTERNET; ADDRESS; RECALL; REPORT**

2/9/67 (Item 1 from file: 713)
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EDITORIALS INSPECTION OVERHAUL PROVED TIMELY

Atlanta Constitution (AC) - Tuesday, August 26, 1997

Section: EDITORIAL Page: A/(CONSTITUTION): 06

Word Count: 421

TEXT:

The withdrawal of 25 million pounds of hamburger ---the largest food recall in U.S. history ---is a huge blow to the processor, Hudson Foods Inc. The company lost its best customer, Burger King, which understandably wants unblemished suppliers. The U.S. Department of Agriculture had to intervene swiftly after at least 16 people, all in Colorado, were sickened by E. coli bacteria in meat traced to the company's meat-processing plant in Columbus, Neb. Fortunately, all those sickened recovered, but this breed of bacteria is nasty ---especially threatening to children and the elderly.

USDA inspectors are checking to see whether the contamination originated at one of seven slaughterhouses that supply raw, de-boned meat to the Hudson Foods plant. In that sense, Hudson Foods may be a victim of another company's slip-up. Nevertheless, inspectors accused the company itself of following unacceptable practices at its Columbus plant. They included poor record-keeping and quality control and, most objectionable, the use of leftover raw meat from one day's production in the next day's processing. Because of the overlap, the company couldn't guarantee that contamination was contained to a certain date.

Hudson Foods expanded its recall, earlier set at 1.2 million pounds, and shut down its Columbus plant. The Department of Agriculture made it clear it would have withheld its inspection seal if Hudson Foods hadn't acted. Without that seal, meat cannot be sold in the United States.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman doesn't think that's an adequate safeguard, and after Congress reconvenes next month, he will ask it for the authority to shut down offending food processors. It's a reasonable request and deserves a thoughtful hearing.

The Clinton administration's overhaul of the nation's antiquated "poke and sniff" meat-inspection regimen gets under way in January in plants that employ 500 workers or more. By 2000, even the smallest meat processors will fall under its jurisdiction. This much-improved system, which requires rigorous scientific checks at key points in the processing of meat, can't

possibly stamp out all contamination. Just the same, it should definitely lower the incidence of deaths attributed to food poisoning in meat and poultry, estimated at 4,000 in this nation annually by the USDA.

If you have any doubts about your hamburger, then grill, broil or fry it until it registers 160 degrees Fahrenheit with a meat thermometer. Develop a taste for well-done meat. That's the surest way to know it's safe.

CAPTION:

The Hudson Foods plant in Columbus, Neb., was shut down last week. /
DENNIS GRUNDMAN / Associated Press

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MEAT RECALL IS BIGGEST EVER IN U.S.; PLANT IS SHUT

Atlanta Constitution (AC) - Friday, August 22, 1997

By: Craig Schneider STAFF WRITER

Section: NATIONAL NEWS Page: A/(CONSTITUTION): 01

Word Count: 368

TEXT:

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced the largest food recall in U.S. history Thursday, condemning 25 million pounds of meat while closing the Nebraska plant that processed it.

Citing problems of meat handling, record-keeping and weak quality control standards, Glickman said the Hudson Foods plant will stay shut until it implements "far more stringent safety standards that we have specifically laid out for them, based on what we have found in our investigation."

Hudson Foods was linked last week to more than a dozen people who got sick from eating beef contaminated with E. coli, a potentially deadly bacteria that causes severe diarrhea, cramps and dehydration.

The meat recall grew from 20,000 pounds to 1.2 million pounds last week, then increased dramatically this week after an investigative unit descended on the plant and discovered that meat already recalled may have contaminated other beef.

In Georgia, the recall prompted Boston Market to stop serving meatloaf at its 16 metro Atlanta stores because the beef came from Hudson Foods. "Boston Market is cooperating with the recall and is looking for another vendor to supply meatloaf," said spokeswoman Tiffany Guidry.

Last week, potentially contaminated meat patties were pulled from the shelves of Wal-mart SuperCenters in 11 cities in Georgia. Wal-Mart officials also announced that Hudson Foods meat products have been swept from the shelves of its stores nationwide as well as the stores of its subsidiary, Sam's Club.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Thursday that 15 people became ill between June 14 and July 14, and five of them were hospitalized. Eleven said they had eaten frozen patties, and eight recalled

THE KANSAS CITY STAR, August 30, 1997, Saturday

10 years later came mad cow disease, which buffeted the livestock industry in Britain and worried consumers in America, even though the disease was never found in the United States.

Bill Helming of Olathe, an agricultural economist who serves as a consultant for clients in all phases of the food industry, said beef had been losing ground over the last 16 years.

"This announcement (of the recall) is just a minuscule trend to the overall trends already in place," he said. "It's bad news for cattle producers, even though cattle producers didn't have anything to do with this."

Any news that suggests a food item was tainted hurts that industry.

"How do you quantify the impact of that in the perception of the American consumer?" he asked. "And does that have an impact on consumer attitudes and their buying habits on sources of protein? I guess you'd have to say it does. To what degree, I don't know."

Max E. Deets, a Beloit, Kan., farmer who is president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, expects the effect to be short-lived.

"We do feel like we've had our share of adverse publicity," he said. "Unfortunately, there's some emotionalism, some misinformation. The most helpful thing we can do is inform people how to handle food."

Some supermarkets have been fielding inquiries about the E. coli outbreak but said demand for beef remained high.

And unless the recent headlines depress the market, beef will be what Americans want on this three-day Labor Day weekend.

Although consumption averages 46 million pounds on normal days, it soars to 57.5 million pounds daily over the holiday weekend, according to The Associated Press.

"We have seen no decrease in sales due to the beef recall," said Jim Watters, director of a Hy-Vee Food & Drug Store at Interstate 29 and Barry Road. "If anything, we have seen increases in sales by as much as a quarter percent."

The same holds true for the Hy-Vee at 301 N.E. Rice Road in Lee's Summit. Between Monday and Friday afternoon, the store sold 3,960 pounds of ground beef as people stocked up for the big barbecue weekend, assistant market manager Kerby Hough said.

"I talk to hundreds of customers a day, and they don't seem that concerned," Hough said.

But that is not true for John Richardson, head meat cutter at a Price Chopper in Truman Corners Shopping Center in Grandview.

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August 30, 1997

SECTION: News; Pg. A6

LENGTH: 520 words

HEADLINE: Government seeks food recall power; Agriculture - Department, FDA

BYLINE: RICK WEISS

BODY:

WASHINGTON -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman proposed legislation Friday that would strengthen the government's power to recall potentially tainted meat and punish companies that violate federal food-safety standards.

The Food and Drug Administration later announced it would push for similar legislation, which in both cases would grant the authority to impose fines of as much as \$100,000 a day on offending companies.

The proposals, which drew immediate fire from food industry organizations, came just one week after Glickman negotiated the recall of 25 million pounds of hamburger patties produced by Hudson Foods Inc. -- the largest meat recall in history.

That move technically was voluntary, because under current regulations the U.S. Department of Agriculture lacks the authority to demand that companies recall products whose safety is questionable.

Giving me the power to impose fines on violators, order recalls and halt operations ... will put more teeth in our oversight over the industry and better help protect consumers," Glickman said at a news conference.

Glickman has fought for such powers twice before, in 1994 and 1996. Both efforts stalled in Congress amid stiff opposition from the food industry. But some congressional observers said that if ever such legislation had a chance of passing, now is the time.

I think it's possible this time that the feeling of the public after this hamburger recall may actually have an impact on the Congress," said Carol Tucker Foreman, who was USDA assistant secretary for food and consumer services from 1977 to 1981 and now is a coordinator for the Safe Food Coalition, an advocacy group.

Even though there is a general mistrust of government on this subject," Foreman said, the people want the government to do more, and that comes out in every poll."

But the proposed pieces of legislation, which would amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, face a negative campaign by the nation's major food makers, marketers and processors, who Friday characterized the changes as unnecessary.

LEVEL 1 - 13 OF 44 STORIES

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THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

August 30, 1997, Saturday, STATE EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 1A

LENGTH: 761 words

HEADLINE: New USDA authority to order recalls sought Congress asked to OK fines,
food plant shutdowns

BYLINE: Los Angeles Times

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

BODY:

WASHINGTON - Citing his inability to force meatpackers to recall tainted products, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman asked Congress on Friday to give his department enhanced authority to protect consumers from food-borne illnesses.

The U.S. Agriculture Department "needs more authority to act quickly and decisively to remove suspect products from the marketplace," Mr. Glickman said. He used last week's "voluntary" recall of 25 million pounds of hamburger as an example of the Agriculture Department's limited enforcement powers.

The legislation he proposed Friday, if enacted, would authorize the Agriculture Department to order recalls of suspect products, impose civil fines against processors and shut down plants when there is "any willful or repeated violation of federal meat and poultry laws."

Although opposition by the meatpacking industry has derailed similar proposals in the past, Mr. Glickman said he is convinced that growing public concern about food safety enhances prospects for passage.

"We have asked for these authorities before, but I think the dynamics of the debate have changed a bit in light of recent events," he said.

Mr. Glickman was referring to the discovery of a potentially deadly strain of the E. coli bacterium in frozen hamburger patties manufactured at a Hudson Foods Co. processing plant in Nebraska.

The tainted patties were linked to an outbreak of food-borne illness in Colorado.

The National Food Processors Association said it sees no justification for expanding the USDA's power.

"While we share the secretary's concern that contaminated food be promptly removed from the marketplace, the current system has been effective in accomplishing this for decades," said Dane Bernard, vice president for the association's food safety programs.

THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS, August 30, 1997

The Associated Press contributed to this report. Distributed by Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: August 31, 1997

The USDA can withdraw its inspectors from a meat or poultry plant if it suspects that safety has been compromised, in the hope that without those inspectors' seal of approval the company will not be able to market its products.

The proposals will be presented to Congress when lawmakers return next week.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: August 31, 1997

Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, August 30, 1997

There would have been more testing done that perhaps would have made it less likely that the contamination would have occurred," he said. "But I cannot tell you in all honesty that any one thing that would have been done would have prevented the contamination from occurring."

If that's the case, Rep. Marion Berry, D-Ark., wondered why the law is needed. Like other members of Arkansas' congressional delegation, Berry was wary of Glickman's proposal and said he would have to study it.

"The Department of Agriculture already has the authority to ensure a safe food supply," said Berry, who represents the agricultural 1st District in northeast Arkansas and is a member of the House Agriculture Committee.

"We have to be very careful before we support legislation that would create another regulatory layer," he said. "I'm not sure I'm in favor of giving the secretary more authority than he already has."

Berry said he thinks the department showed "very poor judgment and absolutely no science" in its recent handling of findings of trace amounts of dioxin, a suspected carcinogen, in two Tyson Foods chickens. The two birds did not meet a new, higher standard set by the government in July. As a result, poultry, catfish and egg producers had to prove their products were below specific dioxin levels. Some plants had to suspend operations.

Rep. Vic Snyder, D-Ark, agreed with Rep. Asa Hutchinson, R-Ark., who commented earlier in the week that the Hudson case seemed to show how well the current system works.

"It seems to me that food producers have been very sensitive to correct problems as soon as possible to avoid marketplace reaction," Snyder said. "This legislation implies somehow that they don't follow requests for recalls. I want to see evidence that that's happening."

U.S. Sen. Dale Bumpers, D-Ark., has also said he wasn't sure he wanted to grant power to levy civil fines to one person. But Bumpers said earlier this week he would consider supporting a bill that would expand Glickman's authority to punish repeat offenders.

Glickman on Friday publicly thanked Bumpers, among other legislators, for his support of the department's proposed food safety budget. That budget includes money for research on new technologies and on the E. coli bacteria responsible for the contamination in the Hudson case.

He has to shop around now for a sponsor for the Food Safety Enforcement Enhancement Act of 1997, but Glickman said several legislators have shown an interest. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., announced support for the measure Friday afternoon.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

-DATE: September 02, 1997

Burger Recall Grows To 25 Million Pounds; Nebraska Plant Shut

W. Post 8/22/97

100
02
By Rick Weiss
and Caroline E. Mayer
Washington Post Staff Writer A1

A major meat processing company already under federal investigation for its recent distribution of tainted hamburgers is shutting down its Nebraska beef processing facility indefinitely and recalling all burgers shipped from the plant, estimated to be about 25 million pounds. Agriculture Department and company officials announced yesterday.

The enormous nationwide recall, the largest by far in U.S. history, was a "non-negotiable" recommendation from the government. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said. It was put to the plant's owner, Hudson Foods Inc. of Rogers, Ark., after federal inspectors uncovered evidence that the company's meat processing, bacterial testing and book-keeping procedures are inadequate to assure that its products are safe.

"Enough new information has come to light so we are ready to take

action," Glickman said at a hastily called news conference.

The move expands upon a 1.2 million-pound hamburger recall at the same plant, announced last Friday. That recall was ordered after federal investigators determined that Hudson hamburgers produced during three days in June had caused 16 cases of food poisoning in Colorado.

In a statement released yesterday, Hudson Foods said it was closing the plant and initiating the recall "out of an abundance of caution and to restore the public confidence."

Undersecretary for Food Safety Cathie Woteki urged consumers to check their freezers for any Hudson Foods frozen hamburgers and return them to the place of purchase. All Hudson beef products are labeled with "establishment number" 13569.

The company's burgers are carried by such national chains as Burger King, Wal-Mart, Boston Market, Sam's Club and Safeway. Most restaurants and grocery stores in the

See MEAT, A12, Col. 1

Burger Recall Grows; Packing Plant to Close

By MARTHA GROVES
TIMES STAFF WRITER

106

Vastly expanding what was already the largest food recall in U.S. history, a Nebraska plant that packaged possibly tainted hamburger patties is ordering back an estimated 25 million pounds of the product and will close indefinitely. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Thursday.

Hudson Foods Inc., owner of the Columbus, Neb., plant, agreed to dramatically broaden the scope of the recall after federal agriculture officials issued a "non-negotiable" recommendation, Glickman said. Federal inspectors had uncovered production practices suggesting that more

Continued from A1

ground beef might have been contaminated with *E. coli* bacteria than originally suspected.

Last week, after a link was made with 16 Colorado cases of *E. coli* food poisoning, Hudson Foods announced recalls over successive days, first of 20,000 pounds, then an additional 20,000 and, last Friday, a record 1.2 million pounds. Thursday's vault to 25 million pounds—or 100 million burgers—makes this by far the largest food recall that government officials could remember. That amount falls just shy of a typical day's U.S. production of ground beef.

Watchdog groups said the plant closing and continuing federal investigation of Hudson raise concerns about the government's plant-inspection methods at a time when food safety is increasingly on consumers' minds.

The Hudson products—all bearing establishment No. 13569—were distributed to grocery stores, fast-food chains and warehouse outlets, including Safeway, Sam's Clubs (owned by Wal-Mart), Burger King and Boston Market. USDA officials suggested that consumers check their freezers for any Hudson products and return them to the retailer for a refund.

It is not known how much of the beef is still in Southern California or might have been consumed here. But previous indications were that the region was only minimally affected.

Burger King announced it would immediately pull all Hudson products from its restaurants. About 25% of Burger King outlets carry Hudson beef products, and some of those restaurants may experience temporary shortages of burgers, the company said in a statement.

Boston Market ordered Hudson patties pulled from all of its 1,200 stores.

"The patties will be out of our stores within the next 15 minutes," said Jeff Beckman, a Boston Market spokesman, after the recall announcement. For a time, he said, meatloaf won't be available at certain outlets.

Southern California locations, the company said, do not use Hudson ground beef.

Hudson, based in Rogers, Ark., said in a statement that it was suspending operations "out of an abundance of caution and to restore the public confidence."

The plant will not reopen, Glickman said at a hastily arranged Washington news conference, until the company has adopted "far more stringent safety standards that we have specifically laid out for them based on what we have found in our investigation."

Among other discoveries by U.S. Department of Agriculture investigators was that the plant had on two successive days packaged beef left over from the previous day's production, because of the breakdown of a packing machine. This proved problematic because the beef from the first of those three days—June 5—was later shown to contain *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, which can cause severe, bloody diarrhea and can be fatal. That problem was made worse by inadequate bookkeeping, which made it tough to track particular lots of meat, and by possibly unsatisfactory testing, said Thomas J. Billy, administrator of the agency's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Although the USDA has no specific prohibition on such a practice, meat plants typically finish packaging the entire supply on a given day, Billy said.

The harsh action was called for, officials said, even though they have evidence that the contamination occurred not in the plant but at one or more of the slaughterhouses that supply it.

Technically, the Hudson action is described as a voluntary recall. But Glickman used the opportunity to urge Congress to pass legislation granting the agency the authority to mandate food recalls on its own.

During the news conference, he said "one of the biggest loopholes" was the federal government's lack of power to order recalls. The agency often does not publicize

recalls, depending on companies' assurances, and inspect food products are recalled from the pipeline before they get to the public.

"When Congress comes back from recess," Glickman said, "I will have ready for them legislation that gives me the authority to order recalls as well as to impose civil fines."

The administration supported two similar proposals earlier this decade, both of which failed.

Consumer activists said the steps raise concerns on two scores: the efficacy of government inspections and the safety of industry practices.

"The USDA puts its seal on meat and poultry, and they're supposed to make sure it's safe and wholesome," said Felicia Nestor, food safety project director at the Government Accountability Project, a whistle-blower-protection group in Washington. "The USDA should have had procedures in place and the enforcement resources to catch this problem before it got to this point."

However, she said, the agency is so short-staffed that inspectors have a very difficult time just getting to these plants. The Government Accountability Project last year issued a report warning of the dangerous shortage of federal meat and poultry inspectors. Many inspectors, Nestor said, must cover more than a dozen plants in a day over a route of more than 100 miles.

"Practices in the meat industry have been fairly sloppy until the past [few] years brought that industry under a microscope," said Caroline Smith DeWaal, director of food safety at the Washington-based Center for Science in the Public Interest, a consumer group. "These are the kinds of practices that the industry will have to come to grips with."

James "Bo" Reagan, executive director of science and technology at the National Cattlemen's Beef Assn., a Denver trade group, agreed that meat plant managers will undoubtedly be scrutinizing their own practices in the wake of this massive recall and plant closing.

"If I was running one, I sure would be going through everything that we were doing."

Beyond that, he said the trade group is "very supportive of what

106



Associated Press

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman discusses plant's closure.

the USDA is doing."

Catherine Woteki, undersecretary for food safety, noted in an interview that the USDA is in a transition period. Beginning in late January, most meat and poultry plants will have to have in place a system of preventive controls, known as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, or HACCP.

Under this program, long advocated by activists and the food industry, companies must identify points in their production processes most likely to lead to contamination and to create acceptable plans for preventing it. They will be forced, among other things, to begin testing for *E. coli*, which is carried in fecal matter. There will be no tolerance for *E. coli* O157:H7, which was responsible for the deaths of four children who ate Jack-in-the-Box hamburgers in 1993.

Most experts maintain that scientifically based microbial testing, rather than inspectors' current

"poke and sniff" method, will help curb contamination. The role of USDA inspectors, Billy said, will shift to include oversight and verification of these programs in addition to old-fashioned inspection methods. Inspectors also will broaden their duties to include coverage of trucking and other transportation methods and retail outlets, in an effort to follow food from farm to table.

Hudson spokesman Robert Udowitz, in Washington, said the company had an HACCP program in place, ahead of the government's mandated schedule. If that is so, that could feed the fears of HACCP opponents that such programs won't be enough to halt all contamination.

Hudson shares fell 19 cents to close at \$15.13 in New York Stock Exchange trading.

Times wire services contributed to this story.

Plant linked to tainted meat closes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

106

A Nebraska plant that produced possibly contaminated hamburger patties has been shut down in the wake of an outbreak of illness in Colorado, the Agriculture Department announced yesterday.

Hudson Foods Co. also was expanding its previous recall to include all hamburger meat that originated at the plant, an estimated 25 million pounds of beef.

USDA officials said it was the department's largest recall ever. But it was only a small fraction of the 8 billion pounds of ground beef produced in the country each year. And the Columbus plant accounts for less than 7 percent of Hudson Foods' sales, the company said.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said the company agreed to the shutdown for its Columbus, Neb., plant. It will not reopen until Hudson Foods has adopted "far more stringent safety standards that we have specifically laid out for them based on what we have found in our investigation," he said.

"We continue to monitor the situation very closely, but all the evidence at this point indicates that

USDA says E. coli outbreak contained

we have contained the outbreak," Mr. Glickman said.

He said fewer than 20 people are known to have gotten sick from the tainted meat. Officials also said the contamination originated outside the plant, at the slaughterhouse.

Hudson Foods said in a statement that it ordered the recall "out of an abundance of caution and to restore the public confidence." It added that raw ground beef at the plant is the only product involved in the recall.

E. coli bacteria contamination is suspected. The initial Hudson recall began after health officials in Colorado traced the illnesses of more than a dozen people to hamburger patties they ate in early June.

The USDA has evidence that the contamination occurred not in the plant but at one or more of the slaughterhouses that supply it, said Tom Billy, administrator of the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Officials are looking at the seven slaughterhouses that were known to have supplied the plant on June 5, he said.

Mr. Glickman said the recall was being expanded after USDA officials yesterday discovered problems in the plant's handling and recording procedures. Specifically, he said, investigators discovered the plant had a practice of using leftover raw meat from one day in the next day's production.

E. coli is a potentially deadly bacteria that often gets into food through contact with fecal matter. It causes severe diarrhea, cramp, and dehydration and was blamed for three deaths and hundreds of illnesses in Washington state in 1993, mainly due to undercooked burgers.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which investigated the E. coli outbreak associated with the patties in Colorado, said yesterday that 15 persons became ill between June 14 and July 14, five of whom were hospitalized. Eleven said they had eaten frozen patties, and eight specifically remembered eating Hudson Foods patties, the CDC said.

W. Times 8/22/97 A6

25 million pounds of beef recalled

By Anita Manning
USA TODAY 8/22/97 A1

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Thursday effectively closed down a beef processing plant that produced contaminated hamburger and expanded a beef recall from 1.2 million pounds to an estimated 25 million pounds — the largest meat recall ever.

Hudson Foods of Rogers, Ark., has closed its Columbus, Neb., meat plant until it can adopt "far more stringent safety standards," said Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman.

The company notified customers, including Safeway, Burger King, Wal-Mart, Sam's Club and Boston Market, to pull all burgers made at that plant.

The USDA is warning consumers to look for Hudson's frozen beef patties marked with "Establishment Number 13569," and return them to stores. Consumers can call 1-800-535-4555 for information.

USDA investigated the plant after 16 people in Colorado suffered food poisoning caused by

E. coli O157:H7, a virulent bacteria that causes pain and bloody diarrhea and can lead to kidney failure and death.

The cases that triggered the initial recall Aug. 12 were traced to beef processed June 5 at the Hudson plant, says Thomas Billy of the USDA.

Investigators found it was a practice at the plant to refrigerate meat that hadn't been processed at the end of the day and mix it in with the next day's meat, he says.

On Thursday they learned that due to a machine breakdown on June 5, "several thousand pounds of their product was put into the cooler, and put back into production on the 6th, which opens the possibility that organisms that were in the product on the 5th were in it on the 6th, then added into the meat processed on the 7th," Billy says.

Inspectors could find no break in this chain and called for a voluntary recall of all beef produced at the plant from June 4 to the present.

Glickman said the incident points to his department's inability under current law to close a meat processing plant, unilaterally recall meat or impose civil fines. Manufacturers must agree to such measures, as Hudson Foods did Thursday. Glickman said he will seek those powers in legislation he'll submit to Congress next month.

U.S. Forces Hudson Foods to Widen Meat Recall

106

WSJ 8/22/97

By BRUCE INGERSOLL
And SUSAN WARREN **A3**

Staff Reporters of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON — Hudson Foods Inc. has closed down its Nebraska processing plant and recalled all of the plant's production since early June — an estimated 25 million pounds of ground beef — out of fear that the meat may be tainted with a virulent strain of bacteria. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman announced.

The company has agreed to destroy all the ground beef on hand at the plant in Columbus, Neb., and to notify its major customers — including the Safeway Inc. supermarket chain, Grand Metropolitan PLC's Burger King fast-food chain, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Boston Chicken Inc.'s Boston Market restaurant chain — that they should stop using or selling any products from that plant.

Hudson Foods built the Columbus plant to supply Burger King with ground beef. When construction plans were unveiled in 1994, Hudson said the \$16 million plant would employ 100 workers and have the capacity to process up to 200 million pounds of ground beef annually. A Burger King spokesman yesterday said a small percentage of the 1,650 Burger King stores affected by the recall will run out of beef, but the company hopes to have every store replenished within 24 hours.

A Boston Chicken spokesman said the recall affects 40% of its Boston Market restaurants nationwide, or about 480 stores in 22 states. Those stores won't be able to serve meat loaf until another supplier can be found, probably within a few days.

Wal-Mart, based in Bentonville, Ark., said it removed all Hudson ground-beef products from shelves at its Wal-Mart Supercenters and Sam's Club stores on Aug. 13.

Safeway, of Pleasanton, Calif., said it sold Hudson patties in 115 of its Colorado stores, but removed all the Hudson product and suspended shipments from the company after the original recall was announced. None of the rest of its 1,368 stores nationwide receive Hudson beef.

For Hudson Foods, the massive recall is a major financial setback. It amounts to 27% of the plant's annual production, valued at \$24.5 million. But Agriculture Department officials maintained that it was unavoidable because of the plant's serious problems. In a statement from its headquarters in Rogers, Ark., the company said it ordered the recall "out of an abundance of caution and to restore the public confidence."

The Agriculture Department forced Hudson Foods to take the unprecedented action after a team of investigators and food-safety officials found evidence at the

Columbus plant indicating the possibility of wider product contamination than initially thought. They were also troubled by problems they discerned in the plant's record-keeping, safety-testing and meat-handling procedures.

Investigators, however, don't believe the contamination occurred at the plant. Instead, they are focusing on seven slaughterhouses known to have supplied beef trimmings to the plant on June 5, said Thomas Billy, administrator of the Food Safety and Inspection Service.

Investigators weren't ruling out the possibility that some slaughterhouses also will have to recall truckloads of trimmings that they supplied other ground-beef plants like Hudson's, and that those plants in turn will have to recall their shipments.

The Columbus plant will remain closed until the company has adopted the "far more stringent safety standards that we have specifically laid out for them, based on what we have found in our investigation," Mr. Glickman said yesterday.

Never before has an Agriculture Department recall mushroomed to such enormous size. It began at 20,000 pounds of ground beef Aug. 12 after Colorado health officials linked a midsummer outbreak of food poisoning to frozen Hudson burger patties tainted with *Escherichia coli*

Please Turn to Page A6, Column 1

Hudson Foods Expands Recall

Continued From Page A1

057:117, a potentially deadly strain of bacteria. By Friday, the recall had escalated to 1.2 million pounds, the largest beef recall ever until yesterday.

At least 15 people are known to have fallen ill between June 14 and July 14, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Five of them had to be hospitalized with severe stomach cramps and bloody diarrhea. Eleven said they had eaten frozen patties, and eight specifically recalled eating Hudson Foods patties, the CDC said.

"We continue to monitor the situation very closely," Mr. Glickman said, "but all the evidence at this point indicates that we have contained the outbreak."

The agriculture secretary urged consumers to return all packages of Hudson brand-name frozen beef patties with Establishment No. 13569 printed inside the USDA inspection seal and to check with restaurants to ensure they aren't using the suspect beef.

Over the weekend, Mr. Glickman dispatched teams of auditors and emergency-response officers to the Columbus plant and the company's headquarters to determine whether Hudson tried to hide the extent of possible product contamination. They also were instructed to find out which slaughterhouses supply the plant with the beef trimmings for processing into burger patties and "called chunks of ground

meat." In addition to shutting down its post-June 5 production, Hudson had a practice of using trimmings left over from one day in the next day's production, Mr. Billy said. A Hudson spokesman countered that the plant has been doing so "under the guidance of USDA" since it opened. "It is our understanding that this is a common practice in the red meat industry," he said.

The department is taking no chances in the Hudson case because *E. coli* 057:117 is such a dangerous type of bacteria. Found in the fecal matter of cattle, it can be easily spread to beef carcasses in the slaughter process. It was to blame for a 1993 outbreak

of food poisoning in the Pacific Northwest in which four children died and 700 people became sick after eating tainted Jack in the Box hamburgers.

In a statement, Hudson Chairman James F. Hudson said the company is cooperating fully with the Agriculture Department and agrees that the closing of the plant, which now employs about 230 people, is warranted.

"We hope and believe this suspension will not last long," he said. "Suspending operations, in fact, should help expedite the USDA investigation and the investigation that Hudson Foods initiated last week."

While the record recall is causing headaches for Burger King and Boston Chicken, it doesn't seem to be causing an industry-wide traffic jam yet. Livestock traders said the 25 million pounds being recalled amount to a few weekdays of ground-beef production from the nation's entire meat-packing industry. And there are hundreds of millions of pounds of meat in cold storage, some of which can be ground into hamburger.

Livestock traders are watching today to see whether speculation about a consumer backlash against hamburger will dent cattle prices. Word of the Hudson plant closing reached industry analysts after the end of trading yesterday.

"There's a lot of worry in the market," said Dan Vaught, a trader with A.G. Edwards & Sons in St. Louis.

—Robert L. Rose and Scott Kilman
in Chicago contributed to this article.

25 Million Pounds of Beef Is Recalled

106
10/2

Plant Is Closing Over a Danger of Bacteria

NY Times - 8/22/97

By MICHAEL JANOFSKY

WASHINGTON, Aug. 21 — A Nebraska meat-processing plant is closing indefinitely and is expanding its recall of ground beef to 25 million pounds after Federal investigators found evidence that far more meat might be contaminated by a hazardous bacteria than originally suspected. Last week, the plant recalled 1.2 million pounds of meat.

Although today's actions were voluntary, they were undertaken by the plant's owner, Hudson Foods of Rogers, Ark., under an implicit threat from the Department of Agriculture that unless the processing and administrative problems at the plant were corrected, the department would force the plant to close by withdrawing inspectors who insure food safety.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said at a news conference today that the latest recall was the largest in United States history. Mr. Glickman said Federal investigators found evidence this week that hamburger patties left over from production on June 5 — which showed evidence of the potentially deadly bacteria, *E. coli* 0157:H7 — were added to production the next day. As a result, the company could not guarantee that any meat produced subsequently would be free of the bacteria, leading the Agriculture Department to press for latest recall.

Every year in the United States, bacteria in meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, fruit and vegetables kill as many as 9,000 people, mostly children and elderly people, and sicken millions. So far, Colorado accounts

for all 17 cases of *E. coli* poisoning traced to the Nebraska plant, and all of those people have recovered.

Mr. Glickman said: "I believe that the action we are taking today, while tough, is the only option based on the new information our investigators have uncovered. This is a big step, but the evidence indicates we have contained the outbreak."

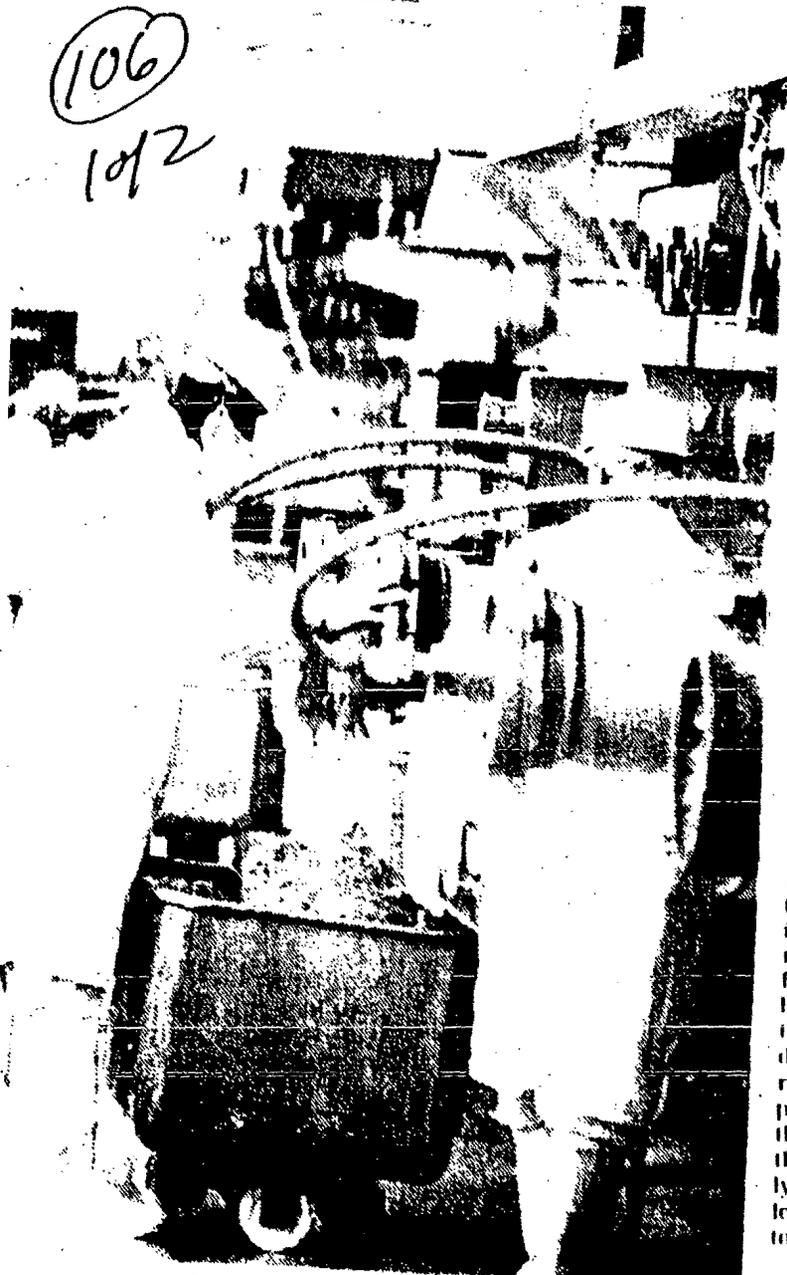
Because a recall is only voluntary, Mr. Glickman said he would ask Congress in the fall to give the Agriculture Department the authority to impose a recall and civil penalties against plants that do not comply with Federal regulations.

In any case, supermarkets and restaurants that use or sell ground beef that might have been contaminated with *E. coli* bacteria were removing it today and were seeking to reassure customers about the safety of their products. [Page A20]

The tainted meat from the Hudson plant, in the eastern Nebraska town of Columbus, is the most prominent case of the *E. coli* bacteria since four children died and hundreds of other people became ill in 1993 after they ate undercooked hamburgers sold by Jack in the Box fast-food restaurants in the Northwest.

That outbreak led to the creation of a Vice-Presidential commission,

Continued on Page A20



Investigators found weak safety standards and risky practices at Hudson Foods Co. hamburger plant in Columbus, Neb.

Contaminated Ground Beef Is Recalled; Nebraska Plant Is Shut Down

106 Continued From Page A1 2/2

which proposed more stringent methods of monitoring hazardous bacteria in food-processing plants. A system of protocols recommended by the commission was a major part of the Clinton Administration's effort to improve food safety, a \$43.2 million program in the 1998 budget.

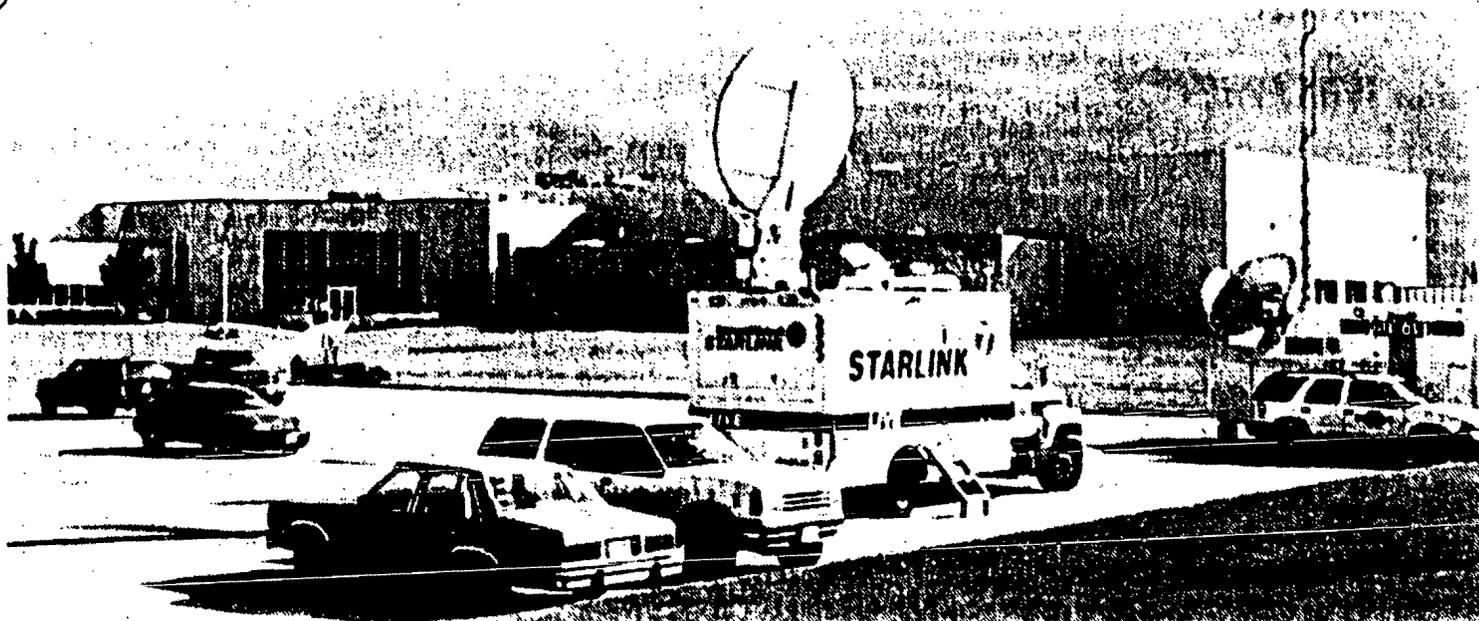
The Agriculture Department began investigating problems at the Hudson plant after company officials expanded their recall of ground beef to 1.2 million pounds on Aug. 15, from an initial recall of 20,000 pounds three days earlier. The company made the first recall after public health officials in Colorado identified the E. coli 0157:H7 bacteria in a Hudson beef patty in late July and on Aug. 12.

But Thomas J. Billy, the administrator of the Food Safety and Inspection Service, an arm of the Agriculture Department, said that as Federal investigators looked deeper into plant operations they found that they plant had weak quality control standards, an inadequate system of record keeping and a routine practice of returning unused raw material into the next day's production.

It was on the basis of those conditions, Mr. Billy said, that the company agreed to recall the additional meat, which Mr. Glickman said had been distributed across the country in the form of four-ounce frozen patties to a variety of chains, including Burger King, Boston Market, Wal-Mart, Sam's Club and Safeway supermarkets.

Department officials conceded they did not know how much of the 25 million pounds remained uneaten. Whatever is returned, they said, will be destroyed by a Hudson plant in Van Buren, Ark.

The company's chairman, James T. Hudson, said in a statement the decisions to expand the recall and close the plant until problems were corrected were made "out of an abundance of caution to restore the public confidence." Mr. Hudson also said the company believed that the source of any contamination had come from the slaughterhouses that



With plant operations halted, the employee parking lot at the Hudson meat processing factory in Columbus, Neb., was all but deserted yesterday.

supplied the raw, deboned meat and not the plant, where the meat is processed into frozen patties — an assessment with which Agriculture Department officials concurred.

Department officials said they had identified seven such slaughterhouses that brought raw product to the plant in question. The officials declined to identify them until they were certain whether any one had supplied contaminated meat, but they said they had found no other indication of illness from meat processed by other customers of the slaughterhouses.

Long concerned with problems of contamination, the Agriculture Department and other Federal agencies approved the new system of hazard controls for processing plants to replace the current means of inspection, which Mr. Glickman described as "poke and sniff."

The new system is scheduled to take effect on Jan. 26 in plants with 500 workers and more. But plants with 10 to 499 workers, including the Hudson plant in Nebraska, are not required to have the new controls in

place until January 1999. The smallest plants, those with fewer than 10 workers, are required to phase in changes by January 2000.

The new monitoring system includes more detailed and frequent inspections of the processing equipment during operation. Many plants around the country have begun using the controls voluntarily. In an interview on Wednesday, a senior official at Hudson's Nebraska plant, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said the plant had already put the controls in place.

"We're way ahead of the curve," the officials said.

Mr. Billy, the food inspection official, said investigators had found that the plant had "some sort of hazard plan." But he dismissed the assertion that Hudson was using the protocols from the new system.

"I am unaware that their plan conforms to the regulations," Mr. Billy said. "I am unaware their science has been validated and I am unaware that Hudson is following the plan on a day-to-day basis."

Mr. Billy also said investigators

had been alarmed by inadequacies in the plant's record-keeping, which obscured levels of production for any given day. He also questioned the plant management's sincerity in dealing with the contaminated product because Federal investigators prompted the wider recall last week, not the company.

In his statement, Mr. Hudson said he hoped that the closing of the Nebraska plant, which is four years old and employs about 230 people, would not last long. But Mr. Billy said it would remain closed until Federal officials were convinced that there were no more indications of contamination in the plant, that the latest monitoring system was in place and the plant's system of record-keeping was improved.

Consumers were advised to return all Hudson Foods frozen beef patties with Establishment No. 13569 printed inside the U.S.D.A. inspection seal, and to insure that restaurants are not using the suspect meat. Consumers may also call the U.S.D.A. hot line for information at (800) 535-4555, or Hudson's hot line at (800) 447-2670.

Cooking Beef Safely

The Agriculture Department issued an advisory in June about safely cooking ground beef, especially when there is the possibility of E. coli contamination. It read in part:

"Do not rely on the internal color of the meat for safety; instead, use a meat thermometer. When the internal temperature of the burger reaches 160 degrees, the meat is safe."

The department added that hamburgers that are pink on the inside have not always reached an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit, sufficient to kill the bacteria.

The best thermometer for this purpose is the "instant read" type, which is inserted into the center of the burger and records the temperature in 15 seconds.

LEVEL 1 - 2 OF 51 STORIES

Copyright 1997 The Columbian Publishing Co.
The Columbian (Vancouver, WA.)

August 20, 1997, Wednesday

SECTION: C section; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 317 words

HEADLINE: USDA DEVELOPS FAST, ACCURATE TEST FOR E. COLI BACTERIA

BYLINE: AP

BODY:

WASHINGTON (AP) -- A new test developed by Agriculture Department scientists will enable the food industry to detect E. coli bacteria in meat, produce and other products more quickly than ever.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Thursday the test will be used to find E. coli in food "before it gets to the grocery store and the kitchen table."

The food industry performs such tests voluntarily. Glickman said if the new test works as well as it did in laboratories, it will be added to the Agriculture Department's own food-testing programs done by inspectors. The test, described as similar in method to a home pregnancy test, can accurately determine the presence of the dangerous strain of E. coli within five to 10 minutes instead of 48 hours or more, said USDA scientist Dan Laster.

"We think this will encourage more testing of meat and other foods because it is such a simple process," said Laster, who developed the material used in the tests at the agency's Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, Neb.

Some current E. coli tests work as rapidly as the new test, but are not as accurate. Those that are as accurate take longer and cost more, officials said.

Starting in two weeks, the tests will be marketed for about \$ 10 each by Meridian Diagnostics Inc. of Cincinnati, which developed them along with the Agriculture Department. Meridian already makes tests for many infectious illnesses.

The company also plans to apply for Food and Drug Administration approval for consumer and health uses beyond the wholesale food industry, perhaps even in private homes, said Meridian Chairman William J. Motto. "In theory, you could use it anywhere," Motto said.

People infected with E. coli bacteria develop bloody diarrhea and stomach cramps, and it can be fatal. It is most dangerous to infants, the elderly, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems.

LOAD-DATE: August 20, 1997

2/9/8 (Item 2 from file: 492)
DIALOG(R)File 492:Arizona Repub/Phoenix Gaz
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09229055

FAST TEST FOR DANGEROUS E. COLI DEVELOPED

Arizona Republic (AR) - Sunday, August 17, 1997

By: Associated Press

Edition: Final Chaser Section: Front Page: A17

Word Count: 348

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - The food industry soon will be able to quickly and accurately detect E. coli bacteria in meat, produce and other food items under a test developed by U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists, officials say.

The test, described Thursday as similar in method to a home pregnancy test, can determine the presence of a dangerous strain of E. coli within five to 10 minutes instead of 48 hours or more, said department scientist Dan Laster.

"We think this will encourage more testing of meat and other foods because it is such a simple process," said Laster, who developed the material used in the tests at the agency's Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, Neb.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said the tests will be used to find E. coli in food "before it gets to the grocery store and the kitchen table." The food industry conducts such tests voluntarily.

The tests will be marketed for about \$10 each and will be available in two weeks from Meridian Diagnostics Inc. of Cincinnati, which developed them with the Agriculture Department. Meridian already makes tests for many infectious diseases.

The company also plans to apply for Food and Drug Administration approval for consumer uses beyond the wholesale food industry, perhaps even in private homes, said Meridian Chairman William Motto.

"In theory, you could use it anywhere," Motto said.

People infected with E. coli bacteria develop bloody diarrhea and stomach cramps, and the illness can be fatal. It is most dangerous to infants, the elderly, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems.

Some current E. coli tests work as rapidly as the new test, but are not as accurate. And those that are as accurate take longer and cost more, officials said.

In general, the tests would be used this way: A sample of fluid from meat or produce - for example, water used to wash strawberries - would be placed in a plastic well.

A color would immediately appear indicating that the test was done properly. Then within a few minutes, a second color would appear, indicating whether E. coli bacteria were present.

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DESCRIPTORS: FOOD; SAFETY

106
292

beef, and those that did said yesterday they had stopped selling the product.

Burger King announced that it would immediately pull all Hudson products from its restaurants. About 25 percent of Burger King outlets carry Hudson beef products, and some of those restaurants may experience temporary shortages of burgers, the company said in a statement. None of those restaurants are in the Washington area.

Boston Market ordered Hudson patties pulled from all of its 1,200 stores. "The patties will be out of our stores within the next 15 minutes," Jeff Beckman, Boston Market's public relations director, said an hour after the 2:30 p.m. news conference.

Beckman said 40 percent of its stores, including those in the Washington metropolitan area, used Hudson beef from the Columbus, Neb., plant to make meatloaf. For a time, he said, meatloaf will not be available at the affected eateries.

Officials at the Defense Commissary Agency, which supplies the 300 military commissaries around the world, including eight in the Washington area, issued a notice ordering the "offending Hudson beef products" removed from sale. "We're concerned about this matter, but so far we've had no reports of any illness resulting from consumption of Hudson beef patties," said Herb Greene, public affairs specialist for the commissary agency.

Officials at major local supermarket chains, including Giant Food, Safeway, Shoppers Food Warehouse and Super Fresh, all said their stores did not carry Hudson beef patties.

A Safeway spokeswoman in Oakland, Calif., said only one division in the entire country—the Denver stores—did business with Hudson Foods and that division removed all of the company's beef from its stores on the morning of Aug. 12, the day the first recall was announced.

Warehouse stores, including Cosco Wholesale (formerly called Price Club) and BJ's Warehouse Club, also said they did not stock Hudson's beef patties. However, the patties had been carried by Sam's Club, a division of Wal-Mart. Wal-Mart spokeswoman Betsy Reithomeyer said Wal-Mart officials pulled all Hudson ground beef off counter shelves last week.

Glickman said the department was moved to recommend closure of Hudson's Columbus, Neb., plant and a total recall after inspectors learned that the company had a practice of saving leftover raw meat not used in the burger-making operation on one day and adding it to batches of raw meat used to make burgers the next

The best way to eat meat safely is to cook it thoroughly, or make sure it has been cooked thoroughly when dining in restaurants, health experts say.

The simplest way to be certain that meat has been cooked sufficiently is to inspect the inside and make sure it is not red in the middle, according to the Agriculture Department.

The USDA recommends cooking red meat—including ground beef—to at least 160 degrees and poultry to 180 degrees. Large cuts such as pot roasts can be slightly pink in the middle if they have been cooked to at least 145 degrees, but the USDA recommends 170 degrees for well-done.

The agency strongly encourages use of a thermometer to check the temperature.

Simple cleanliness can cut the chance of illness from bacteria on food, according to the USDA. Hands and all surfaces that come in contact with raw meat should be washed.

day. That method makes it increasingly difficult with each day to keep track of whether any leftovers from a contaminated batch have made their way into subsequent batches.

The problem was exacerbated by inadequate bookkeeping methods for tracking the fate of various lots of beef, said Thomas J. Billy, administrator of the department's Food Safety and Inspection Service, which is directing the food safety arm of the Hudson investigation. Billy said the agency also was "concerned" that the company's testing for bacterial contamination has been inadequate.

A separate investigation for possible criminal activity is still under way, said USDA Inspector General Roger Viadero. That investigation was initiated after a USDA audit last week determined that the company's initial estimate of the amount of meat that may have been contaminated in June was short by more than a million pounds.

Billy said the department was now fairly certain that the contamination, caused by a potentially deadly bacterium called E. coli O157:H7, originated in raw meat provided to Hudson from one of seven suppliers. When the culprit supplier is identified definitive-

cessing facilities.

That investigation could lead to additional recalls, officials said.

Billy said Colorado public health officials and scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta are looking into new cases of E. coli poisoning among members of two Colorado families who recently fell ill after eating hamburgers produced at the Hudson plant on June 16.

If DNA fingerprinting studies show a match between the disease-causing bacteria in those people and bacteria in hamburgers saved from the families' freezers, then the scope of contamination from the Hudson plant would be larger than previously recognized. The 16 cases that have been linked so far to Hudson were all tied to burgers produced earlier in the month.

Hudson stressed that the recall does not affect its poultry products, which account for about 93 percent of the company's \$1.4 billion annual revenue. Agriculture officials said they planned to look at Hudson's poultry operations after completing their investigation of the company's beef processing plant.

Billy said the beef plant would not reopen until the company presents the USDA with an acceptable plan for testing its raw meat and revamps its record-keeping and product coding system to allow better tracking of product lots.

The Agriculture Department does not have the authority to force a meat plant to close, a long-standing frustration for Glickman and his predecessors. But it can withdraw its inspectors from a plant. That would leave that plant's meat products lacking the department's seal of approval—a potentially ruinous act, the threat of which generally persuades producers to follow the department's recommendations.

Glickman said he would prepare legislation in time for Congress's return that would grant him the authority to order meat and poultry recalls and levy civil fines against companies that threaten the public health.

Consumers wanting more information about the recall were urged to call the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555. Woteki said the hot line took a record 6,000 calls last weekend after the agency announced its expanded recall.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
To read the latest updates on animal and health inspections from the USDA, click on the above symbol on the front page of The Post's Web site at www.washingtonpost.com

Not going to eat tha

Over 25% of food produced in U.S. is wa

Reducing the amount of leftovers that goes into the garbage is a daily battle.

By **GEORGE ANTHAN**

THE REGISTER'S WASHINGTON BUREAU CHIEF

Washington, D.C. — Jesse

Roush is a Des Moines-area restaurateur who's been in business almost 40 years. He has spent at least part of every day dealing with a major problem for his restaurants, and for the country: food loss.

More than one-fourth of all the food produced in the United States is wasted each year, according to a landmark study by the Agriculture Department.

The numbers are astonishing — 96 billion pounds of the 366 billion pounds of food produced annually are lost at the farm, transportation, processing, supermarket and food-service levels, and at home.

"Understanding where and how much food is lost is an important step in reducing waste and increasing the efficiency of food recovery efforts," the USDA stated.

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, "By recovering a fraction of this lost food, we could get food to those in need, instead of tossing it into the Dumpster."

Reducing Waste

Roush operates Jesse's Embers restaurants at 3301 Ingersoll Ave. in Des Moines and 265 50th St. in West Des Moines.

Daily, Roush and his staff face the issue of how to reduce waste, which can debilitate even the best restaurant. "We try to have zero waste," he said. But he estimated the actual food loss at his restaurants is 5 percent to 10 percent.

"You really have to stay on top of it; if you don't," Roush warned, "the loss percentages go up."

Roush said one of his main losses is produce.

"You chop up a lot of lettuce and whatnot, and if you don't sell it in a couple of days, it's lost."

He added, "We do a lot of things to cut our losses. If we don't have a run on a certain type of steak, we'll have a special, cook it a different way. It may add to our cost, but we sell it. But on prime rib, if you don't sell it, you can never come out of that. And the more varied the menu, the more items you have, you get more waste."

Two-Thirds of Losses

Fresh fruits and vegetables, fluid milk, grain products such as bread and rolls, and sweeteners account for two-thirds of U.S. food losses.

The report by analysts at the USDA's Economic Research Service states that each American consumes an average of 3 pounds of food each day. If only 5 percent of the lost food was recovered, "that quantity would represent the equivalent of a day's food for each of 4 million people." Cutting the loss by 25 percent would feed 20 million people.

"Even a modest increase in the recovery of ... wholesome food could reduce hunger by supplementing existing food-assistance efforts; provide tax savings to farmers, supermarkets and food service establishments that donate food; and lessen the environmental impacts of waste disposal," the USDA said.

The ERS analysts acknowledge

CITIZEN'S GUIDE

The USDA's "A Citizen's Guide to Food Recovery" can be obtained by calling (800) GLEAN-IT or through the Internet at <http://www.usda.gov/fcs/glean.htm>.

that the food loss estimates are difficult to quantify and that they had to rely in some cases on data bases that are up to two decades old, although statistics on food availability and consumption came from the USDA's annual national food supply and utilization survey.

For example, although there are some statistics on food waste in landfills, it's difficult to determine how much household food goes into waste disposal units.

Dramatic Changes

The report notes that there have been dramatic changes in recent years in food processing technology, in the number and types of food

products being marketed and in the restaurant and food service sector.

The analysts said they made adjustments for these changes but emphasized additional in-depth research on food service, processing and household losses "is needed to add precision to these estimates and to provide a more complete picture of food loss across the entire marketing system."

Of course, not all food losses can be recovered for human consumption. These include livestock condemned because of disease, unsafe fresh produce, spoiled perishable food products, plate waste from restaurants and losses associated with processing, including skin, fat and some organs from meat and poultry.

But, the USDA says, food that can be salvaged for human consumption includes:

- Crops left in farmers' fields after harvest.
- Perfectly good produce reject-

FOOD Please turn to Page 56

23

Fighting food loss is a major task

FOOD

2362

Continued from Page 4G

ed because of cosmetic blemishes.

- Unsold fresh produce from wholesalers' and farmers' markets.

- Surplus perishable food from restaurants, cafeterias, caterers and grocery stores.

- Supermarket packaged goods that have been overstocked, have dented cans or are out-of-demand seasonal items.

The USDA said food losses begin before harvest from drought, floods, freezes or pest infestation. Some 7 percent of planted acreage in the U.S. was not even harvested in recent years.

Not Blemish-Free

Then there are harvesting losses. Fruits and vegetables are left on the trees or on the vine if they don't meet consumer demands for blemish-free products.

Mechanized harvesters can simply miss a percentage of the crop, can damage the commodities or can't distinguish between ripe and immature products.

Losses due to insect infestation, mold, deterioration, bacterial degradation and improper transportation and handling occur after food leaves the farm.

Fresh items are subject to "shrinkage" (loss in weight or volume).

Frequent handling of food in itself leads to losses. The USDA said the typical food product is handled 33 times before the consumer touches it at the supermarket.

Then, losses occur as fresh commodities are processed into final food products. About 20 percent of the weight of a fresh apple is lost when it's processed into apple sauce. Fresh potatoes, the USDA report states, lose about half their weight when they're processed into frozen French fries.

Stores remove food products from the shelves when the "sell-by" date is reached. And damaged packaging is blamed for most of the 521 million pounds of canned fruits and vegetables, cereals, pasta and other non-perishable food losses.

The biggest source of waste, the USDA said, is the 91 billion pounds

lost in 1996 at home and in restaurants, cafeterias and other food service outlets.

Home Losses

Most of the home losses include plate leftovers, those wilted vegetables and moldy cheese in the refrigerator, the sprouted potatoes, the two-week-old hot dog buns, the half-eaten boxes of crackers and cereals, the sour milk. It's the result of inattention, over-buying, over-preparation, and cooking mistakes.

The USDA recently published "A Citizen's Guide to Food Recovery," which outlines practical ways to recover food from farm fields, how to collect perishable goods from supermarkets and warehouses and how to salvage surplus prepared meals from

restaurants and cafeterias.

The guide includes recommendations for how volunteers can distribute such food to recognized charitable groups. The guide can be obtained by calling (800) GLEAN-IT or through the Internet at www.usda.gov/fcs/glean.htm.

The USDA in recent months also has conducted "food recovery round-tables" across the country and is working on establishing a National Hunger Clearinghouse to bring together volunteers who are collecting surplus food and the charitable groups that feed the poor.

Also, the department is spearheading plans for a National Summit on Food Recovery. In addition, President Clinton is expected soon to declare a National Week of Food Recovery.

24

LEVEL 1 - 18 OF 18 STORIES

Copyright 1997 The Dallas Morning News
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

July 6, 1997, Sunday, HOME FINAL EDITION

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 35A

LENGTH: 788 words

HEADLINE: Wasting food amid hunger spurs concerns;
Group says salvaging leftovers impractical

BYLINE: Stacy Ann Thomas, Staff Writer of The Dallas Morning News

BODY:

Parents can now turn to the federal government for vindication when telling their children: Eat all the food on your plate. There are starving people in .

More than one-fourth of the food produced in the United States spoils, is thrown away unused or goes uneaten on the plate, according to a study released last week by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The vast majority of this waste occurs in people's homes or in restaurants and other food-service businesses, the study found.

But precocious children may wonder how eating - or not eating - all of their d will help the hungry.

It is not cost-effective, practical or sanitary to salvage household leftovers, said officials with the North Texas Food Bank, which distributes donated food to more than 230 nonprofit agencies in 13 counties.

"There are wastes you can address and wastes you can't," said Ivan Coghlan, manager of food donor relations. "When a person at home prepares a meal for six and only two people are eating, we can't recapture those meals."

Similar problems arise in trying to recover restaurant leftovers, said food bank president Lane Cardwell.

A lot of restaurant waste comes in the form of scraps left on people's plates, said Mr. Cardwell, who is also the president of Eatzi's, a restaurant-grocery store-deli in Oak Lawn.

"Once something has been touched by someone, it's no longer a usable meal," Mr. Cardwell said.

The Agriculture Department recognizes that some of the lost food referred to in the study belongs in the trash, but only a small portion needs to be salvaged to help the hungry, said Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman.

The study estimated that food wasted in homes and food-service sites in 1995 totaled 91 billion pounds, or about 25 percent of the U.S. food supply of 356 billion pounds.

THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS, July 6, 1997

An additional 5.4 billion pounds, or 1.5 percent of the food supply, was lost retail groceries through overstocking, the discarding of perishable items and removal of food for bypassing its "sell-by" date, according to the study, which extrapolated the estimates by examining past research.

The majority of this food was fresh fruit, vegetables, milk, grain products and sweeteners, the Agriculture Department found.

Four million people could be fed by salvaging 5 percent of the wasted food, the study estimated.

"Until now, there has been no effort to quantify the issue," Mr. Glickman said in a telephone interview. "We want people to recognize that we're a land of great bounty."

From a supply standpoint, there is no reason for people to go hungry in the United States, said Mr. Coghlan of the food bank.

But organizations trying to feed the hungry run into difficulties gathering food while it is still edible and delivering it, Mr. Coghlan said.

The North Texas Food Bank tries to obtain food during the manufacturing process, before it ever reaches stores, restaurants or consumers, he said. The government study did not analyze food waste at this level or on the farm.

By acquiring food during manufacturing, the food bank receives larger quantities, which makes transportation and refrigeration more efficient, Mr. Coghlan said.

"We have to have a truck with refrigeration and a driver," Mr. Coghlan said. "We can't send that to Plano to pick up two hot dogs."

The food bank also has a Hunger Link program that focuses on gathering donations from restaurants, cafeterias, hotels, schools, caterers and country clubs.

Donations come and go as businesses open and close or management changes, Mr. Coghlan said.

In the last 10 years, the food industry also has become more efficient, which has cut down on the usable excess food available for the poor, Mr. Coghlan said.

Sometimes, though, restaurants do not participate in food bank programs because they fear that it will make them look inefficient to admit to having leftovers, Mr. Coghlan said.

Leftovers are bad for business, said John Green, the manager of the La Madeleine French Bakery & Cafe in the Galleria.

Mr. Green estimates the quantity of food his restaurant needs to cook each day based on the number of customers he expects.

"It's tough sometimes," Mr. Green said. "We try not to have excess because it affects food costs and my bonus."

THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS, July 6, 1997

The La Madeleine restaurants donate their leftover breads, muffins and other refrigerated food daily to social-service agencies in their communities, he said.

Although consumers cannot donate the leftover peas on their plates to soup kitchens, they can help reduce food waste by encouraging businesses to participate in hunger relief programs, Mr. Glickman said.

"That will have an impact because companies will know that people care about this," Mr. Glickman said.

GRAPHIC: PHOTO(S): (The Dallas Morning News: Kim Ritzenthaler) Johnny Taylor of the Dallas Farmers Market disposes of leftover tomatoes. A federal study found that grocery stores discarded more than 5 billion pounds of food.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: August 7, 1997

Copyright 1997 The Kansas City Star Co.
THE KANSAS CITY STAR

September 1, 1997 Monday METROPOLITAN EDITION

SECTION: OPINION; Pg. B4

LENGTH: 516 words

HEADLINE: The toothless USDA tiger
Regulators should be able to provide greater food safety.

BYLINE: LAURA SCOTT

BODY:

Americans have been reminded of the inadequacies in the nation's food safety laws with the E. coli outbreak linked to the Hudson Foods Inc. plant in Columbus, Neb. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman is among those doing the reminding.

Pressure from Glickman and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which in many ways is a toothless tiger of regulatory enforcement, caused Hudson Foods to shut down the plant until the government is convinced its meat is safe. Meanwhile, one of the company's big customers, Burger King, announced that it would stop buying beef from Hudson Foods.

Glickman reminded Americans that he had no authority to shut down the plant. He said Hudson Foods did so voluntarily. Glickman's option would have been to withdraw federal inspectors, thus denying the company the right to sell its beef in this country.

It is unclear whether the source of the outbreak of E. coli came from the plant or from a Hudson supplier.

It may make skittish consumers feel better for the plant to be shut down and for the USDA to launch an investigation. But until elected officials become convinced that federal regulation is a desirable part of food production, it is a false sense of security.

Since Ronald Reagan's presidency, Republicans in the White House and Congress have worked to undo federal regulatory efforts in the meat business and to give the industry more authority to police itself.

A loosening of federal restrictions, along with outmoded ways of inspecting meat headed for American tables, has made the probability of outbreaks such as the recent one more possible.

As Glickman pointed out in announcing that Hudson Foods is recalling its meat from the Nebraska plant and destroying its remaining products, he needs the authority to order these things done the industry does not do so voluntarily.

2/9/48 (Item 1 from file: 703)
DIALOG(R)File 703:USA Today
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08607631

25 million pounds of beef recalled

USA TODAY (US) - FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY August 22, 1997

By: Anita Manning

Edition: FINAL Section: NEWS Page: 01A

Word Count: 363

TEXT:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Thursday effectively closed down a beef processing plant that produced contaminated hamburger and expanded a beef recall from 1.2 million pounds to an estimated 25 million pounds -- the largest meat recall ever.

Hudson Foods of Rogers, Ark., has closed its Columbus, Neb., meat plant until it can adopt far more stringent safety standards," said Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman.

The company notified customers, including Safeway, Burger King, WalMart, Sam's Club and Boston Market, to pull all burgers made at that plant.

The USDA is warning consumers to look for Hudson's frozen beef patties marked with Establishment Number 13569," and return them to stores.

Consumers can call 1-800-535-4555 for information.

USDA investigated the plant after 16 people in Colorado suffered food poisoning caused by E. coli O157:H7, a virulent bacteria that causes pain and bloody diarrhea and can lead to kidney failure and death.

The cases that triggered the initial recall Aug. 12 were traced to beef processed June 5 at the Hudson plant, says Thomas Billy of the USDA.

Investigators found it was a practice at the plant to refrigerate meat that hadn't been processed at the end of the day and mix it in with the next day's meat, he says.

On Thursday they learned that due to a machine breakdown on June 5, several thousand pounds of their product was put into the cooler, and put back into production on the 6th, which opens the possibility that organisms that were in the product on the 5th were in it on the 6th, then added into the meat processed on the 7th," Billy says.

Inspectors could find no break in this chain and called for a voluntary recall of all beef produced at the plant from June 4 to the present.

Glickman said the incident points to his department's inability under current law to close a meat processing plant, unilaterally recall meat or impose civil fines. Manufacturers must agree to such measures, as Hudson Foods did Thursday.

Glickman said he will seek those powers in legislation he'll submit to Congress next month.

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DESCRIPTORS: MEAT; RECALL; USDA

2/9/49 (Item 1 from file: 704)
DIALOG(R)File 704:(Portland)The Oregonian
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GOVERNMENT CAN'T ENSURE SAFETY OF MEAT

Oregonian (PO) - Saturday, August 23, 1997

By: HEATHER DEWAR - Knight-Ridder News Service

Edition: SUNRISE Section: WIRE STORIES Page: A01

Word Count: 949

MEMO:

TYPE: National

CORRECTION: Published correction ran: 08/26/97:

CLARIFICATION

* The U.S. Department of Agriculture's recall of Hudson Foods Inc. products applies only to Hudson ground beef patties. A story in Saturday editions of The Oregonian may have erroneously implied that the recall was more extensive.

1R

TEXT:

WASHINGTON - Summary: The disease-causing bacterium is developing faster than scientists can come up with tests to trace it

Despite meat recalls, scientific advances and stepped-up plant inspections, the federal government cannot ensure that Americans' food is free of dangerous bacteria.

Experts say it probably never will be able to.

Scientists cannot keep up with the disease-causing toxin that killed three Washington toddlers in 1993 and sickened at least 15 Coloradans this summer. The toxin is carried by the common E. coli bacterium, which seems to be developing new forms faster than scientists can develop tests to trace them or treatments to stop them.

The toxin surfaced in ground meat again this summer, and it is at least 10 times more potent than other common food-borne diseases. A tiny amount can cause a nasty bout of intestinal illness -- as well as kidney failure, brain damage and even death in about one of every 4,000 people stricken.

So the bottom line for shoppers remains the same as it was in Roman times: Caveat emptor. Buyer beware.

People are getting a false sense of security," said epidemiologist

Paul Mead of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. They believe the government will take care of them and secure a perfectly safe food supply.

In fact, the government can't do that. Consumers have to play an active role in protecting themselves."

Under pressure from Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman, Hudson Foods Inc. closed a Nebraska meat-packing plant Thursday and recalled about 25 million pounds of hamburger.

That led to ham-and-cheese and BLT sandwiches replacing Whoppers at 700 Burger Kings around the nation Friday. Burger King, the nation's second-largest fast-food chain behind McDonald's, cleared its stores of patties supplied by Hudson Foods. The Miami-based chain said the recall affected 1,650 of its restaurants in 28 states, but 950 of the restaurants got new beef supplies by Friday. Other Burger Kings in the chain didn't use Hudson as a supplier.

Scientists at the CDC said that none of Thursday's actions will get at the source of the problem: meat already tainted before it reached the plant with a strain of E. coli named O157:H7.

And that strain is only one of E. coli's potentially dangerous forms.

Scientists did not know that in 1982, when they began work on tests that can quickly identify E. coli O157:H7 in people and in food. About a year ago, they succeeded. New tests, not yet widely used in industry, can spot the strain in about eight hours, said researcher David Atcheson of Tufts University-New England Medical Center.

The scientists were fast, but the disease was faster, Atcheson said. He and others have identified about 60 more varieties of E. coli that the new tests won't find. They also carry the lethal agent, known as Shiga toxin.

Named nearly 100 years ago by a Japanese physician, Shiga toxin mysteriously attacks the cell walls of the intestine and, in severe cases, the kidney and brain. It's the cause of several different intestinal diseases, including dysentery epidemics in Africa and Asia.

In the past two years, it has caused outbreaks in Australia, Japan, Great Britain and the United States, using a variety of E. coli strains as its host.

Because tiny quantities can bring on illness, even the available tests

do little good. Atcheson and his colleagues bought 32 1-pound packages of hamburger from local grocery stores, then tested the lower left corner of each one. They found Shiga toxin in five packages, but when they retested other parts of those same 1-pound packages, some portions tested clean.

Just a tiny sample is enough to make you sick," Atcheson said. So, can you test ground beef to a point where you can be entirely sure it was safe? In my opinion, no -- not now, and probably not any time in the foreseeable future. Safe handling and cooking, that's where the buck stops."

In the case of meat, that's pretty easy to do, health officials say. Cooking tainted meat to 160 degrees Fahrenheit kills the toxin. But uncooked foods such as lettuce, juice, cider, alfalfa sprouts and radish sprouts also have caused disease outbreaks. Scientists aren't sure how to prevent those illnesses.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the CDC recommend washing all produce in cold water and regular soap, Mead said, but there's no research proving that helps.

Home gardeners should take care not to spread raw manure on their crops, Mead said. Manure that's been well-heated during the composting process is safe, but composted manure isn't tested for bacteria, either, so even that is a bit of a gamble.

About half of this country's 10,000 cases per year of E. coli-related illness come from ground beef, the health experts say. That's because the animal feces that spread the disease are found on the surface of the meat, and grinding the meat spreads the contamination.

Some new processing methods, such as steam-cleaning the meat as it is butchered, can help stop the spread of contamination. But not all companies use these techniques, and there's no way for shoppers to know which ones do and which ones don't. There's also no evidence that meat or poultry labeled organic, free range or minimally processed is any Mead said.

**CAPTION:
DRAWING,**

Graphic - How to avoid E. coli infection Illustration and text
Sidebar - State inspector recommends returning all Hudson products

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