



## News Updates

***Welcome to the first edition of the BIFSCO member newsletter!***

In this newsletter, you'll find news items, expert commentary, legislative and regulatory updates, research updates, a schedule of upcoming meetings and a "membership toolbox." We'll be sending new editions quarterly, and we welcome your feedback as we seek to make this newsletter as valuable as possible.

### ***Antimicrobial Interventions Reference Document is Now Available***

If you work at the beef harvest or processing levels, there's a new safety resource available to you. A Beef Checkoff-funded reference of antimicrobial interventions has recently been released that summarizes the scientifically-proven antimicrobial interventions available for use at harvest and processing, including links to references. For more information, or if you need assistance in obtaining an article, please call (979) 862-3643.

<http://www.haccpalliance.org/sub/Antimicrobial%20Interventions%20for%20Beef.pdf>

### ***CDC reports progress in foodborne illness prevention has plateaued***

Based on 2008 FoodNet data, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported the incidence of the most common foodborne illnesses in the United States, including Salmonella and *E. coli* O157:H7, have remained essentially flat over the last three years in contrast with significant declines between 1996 and 2004.

<http://cdc.gov/media/pressrel/2009/r090409.htm>

### ***Invitation to the Master's of Beef Advocacy Program***

The disconnect between the public and the nation's food production system is growing, and there's an ever-increasing need to equip people in the beef industry, from ranchers to retailers, to effectively communicate about beef. That's why the Beef Checkoff developed the Master's of Beef Advocacy program, an e-learning site that will help educate the beef spokespeople of the future. The course will include six one-hour modules on beef safety, beef nutrition, animal care, environmental stewardship, modern beef production and the Beef Checkoff. If you're interested in taking part or have questions, send an email to [mba@beef.org](mailto:mba@beef.org).

### ***National Academies Report on FSIS Proposed Risk-Based Rankings***

The National Academies Division on Earth and Life Studies recently published its evaluation of FSIS' data and proposed methodology for ranking slaughtering and processing establishments according to public-health risk.

[http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12650](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12650)

## Upcoming Meetings

### [Nebraska Governor's Conference on Food Safety](#)

May 5-7, 2009  
Lincoln, Nebraska

### [Cattle Industry Summer Conference](#)

July 14-18, 2009  
Denver, Colorado

### [NCBA Fall Legislative Conference](#)

September 13-17, 2009  
Washington, D.C.

### [Cattle Industry Convention and Annual Trade Show](#)

January 27-30, 2010  
San Antonio, Texas

## Legislative and Regulatory Updates

[FSIS Notice 18-09](#): Changes in Sampling Frequency for *E. coli* O157:H7 in Raw Ground Beef

[FSIS Notice 21-09](#): Humane Handling Activities and Documentation in Livestock Slaughter Establishments

[FSIS Notice 22-09](#): Follow-Up Sampling of Certain Raw Ground Beef Products after an FSIS Verification Sample Tests Positive for *E. coli* O157:H7

[FSIS Notice 23-09](#): Routine Sampling of Beef Manufacturing Trim-mings Intended for Use in Raw Ground Beef

[FSIS Directive 6410.1](#): Verifying Sanitary Dressing and Process Control Procedures in Slaughter Operations of Cattle of Any Age

## Research Update

### [Diet, \*Escherichia coli\* O157:H7, and Cattle: A Review After 10 Years](#)

Studies on the effect of cattle diet on *E. coli* O157:H7 continues to draw attention to modern beef production methods. Most recently, well-publicized research has focused on the effect of feeding ethanol co-products to cattle. In this paper, recently published in *Current Issues In Molecular Biology*, the authors review a decade of scientific literature discussing the impacts of feedstuffs, feed additives and antimicrobials on *E. coli* O157:H7 levels in cattle.

Citation:

Callaway, T. R., M. A. Carr, T. S. Edrington, Robin C. Anderson, and David J. Nisbet. 2009. Diet, *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, and cattle, a review after 10 years. *Curr. Iss. Molec. Biol.* 11:67-80.

### [White Paper: Methicillin-Resistant \*Staphylococcus Aureus\*, the Beef Industry and Public Health](#)

Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MRSA) has become one of the most important emerging bacterial pathogens. This white paper provides an overview of the bacterium and its implications for agriculture.

### [White Paper: History of Consumer Food Safety Education: Focus on Beef](#)

This white paper summarizes consumer food safety education efforts over the last several decades with a special focus on beef and consumer behaviors like thermometer use, cross-contamination and hand washing.

# Expert Commentary

## The Approach of the 'Hot Season'

By Dean Danilson

Vice President, Quality Assurance and Food Safety, Tyson Fresh Meats

The 'hot season' is upon us and it is critical to review all aspects of the plant operations and procedures for gaps that contribute to an *E. coli* O157:H7 [ECH7] 'hot day event'.

Between now and this fall – worker performance, programs-procedures, equipment & maintenance, and even uncontrollable external environmental factors can contribute to an 'explosive hot day' – one that can have significant public food safety concern if not dealt with appropriately.

Avoidance and prevention are the most important factors. Since there is currently no foolproof pre-harvest solution for ECH7, the slaughter plant is the first line of offense against foodborne pathogens. Multiple hurdles must be effectively and strategically applied to attack the bacterial hitchhikers that come in with the live animals. The slaughter plant team must engage as if under attack - each and every day – from each and every animal - that enters the plant.

Critical areas must be assessed - early and often – including slaughter hygienic dress, interventions and antimicrobial applications, overall sanitation, quality systems protocols, sampling & testing procedures, cold chains, and facility-related factors [construction, air flows, drains, roofs & ceilings, niches].

In addition to multiple hurdle interventions for prevention and elimination, the beef slaughter plant must also apply a rigorous and robust finished product testing program whether trimmings or ground beef is produced. Low level contaminations, when found, are thus effectively eliminated from the ground beef supply. If a high level event situation does occur, it will be detected by the robust testing program, which then activates a 'hot day' program [also termed 'extraordinary event' day], in which all affected raw ground beef components from the associated period should be reassessed for hazard and risk, and dealt with appropriately.

Best practices that address many of these issues and procedures have been developed by BIFSCO and others in the beef industry, and are available to all at the BIFSCO web site <http://www.bifSCO.org/BestPractices.aspx>

### Membership Toolbox

Food safety can be a difficult subject to communicate proactively to consumers: research shows people aren't necessarily paying attention to food safety unless foodborne illness outbreaks are in the news, and home cooks aren't always open to changing their food preparation habits.

The [Safe and Savory at 160](#) program was launched by the Beef Checkoff in 2008 to help members of the beef industry communicate food safety more effectively to consumers. Research shows that focusing on both the quality and safety benefits of cooking ground beef to 160 F is more likely to motivate change in consumer behavior. Elements of the program have been implemented online, in the media and in retail stores.

Graphics, messages and printed materials are available to help you integrate the Safe and Savory at 160 message into your food safety education efforts. Contact Stephen Myers for more information at [smyers@beef.org](mailto:smyers@beef.org).



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#### **BIFSCO NEWS**

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