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BIOTECHNOLOGY

FDA report revealed consumers are not behind clones

On 15 January 2008, the FDA issued its final report on products from cloned animals stating that evidence showed there was no risk to human health. As a result, such food products will not need to be labeled as originating from cloned animals. Animal rights and other protesters have stated that there is little or no support amongst American consumers for food from cloned animals, with reliable studies showing that consumers will be unwilling to purchase such foods. Many food producers have already said they will not sell meat or milk from cloned animals or their offspring in an attempt to curb potential consumer backlashes.

19 Jan 08

Decision News Media SAS

<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=84096&m=1FNU319&c=hyxurjnrzqfckps>

EFSA statement on the publication of the opinion of the European Group on Ethics and New Technologies on ethical aspects of animal cloning for the food supply

The European Food Standards Authority (EFSA) published a statement on the publication of the opinion of the European Group on Ethics and New Technologies on ethical aspects of animal cloning for the food supply. It makes clear that EFSA recognises that the issue of animal cloning raises ethical, moral and other societal issues beyond its remit. EFSA is yet to finalise its scientific opinion on the implications of animal cloning on food safety, animal health and welfare and the environment, however a final opinion is likely to be published in May 2008. Contributions to the consultation can be made via the EFSA website, where the draft opinion is also available: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1178676922939.htm

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EFSA

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1178680040978.htm

Labeling law to protect against cloning risk

In light of the national approach to labeling of food products associated with cloned animals and their offspring, the California State Senator Carol Migden has brought forward a bill which she believes will protect Californians through labeling, and which will restore consumer confidence and choice. Senator Migden is gaining considerable support from a range of organisations and individuals who consider the FDA report to have relied almost entirely on [what are claimed to be] unsupported assumptions and that it was based more on faith than science.

25 Jan 08

Decision News Media SAS

<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=82813&m=2FLG206&idP=18&c=swewiqhkygfvado&idcat=0>

EFSA cloning report highlights labelling concerns

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published a report on a technical meeting with its Stakeholder Consultative Platform to discuss its Draft Opinion on animal cloning. Exhibiting similarities to a US FDA report earlier in the year, the report concluded that meat and dairy products from cloned animals are most likely safe for human consumption, however indicated that

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food manufacturers remained concerned about customer reaction, and are wary about developments in this area. A significant issue raised by stakeholders was their concern over the validity and accuracy of scientific conclusions drawn when the base of evidence was so limited in the field. The report details issues relating to labeling of food, regulation, and the traceability of cloned animals and their products such as meat and milk.

21 Jan 08

Decision News Media SAS

<http://www.foodqualitynews.com/news/ng.asp?n=83438&m=1FQN226&c=swewiqhkygjado>

ANIMAL DISEASE

Irish food authorities review tuberculosis meat concerns

A report from Ireland's food safety authority (FSAI) noted that *Mycobacterium bovis*, as the causative agent of tuberculosis in animals, may have some potential for transmission of zoonotic tuberculosis through the food chain. Although the report notes that the risk of transmission of *Mycobacterium bovis* to humans through the consumption of meat is low if correct controls are administered, the authors recommend that auditing of the ante- and post-mortem inspections of carcasses at abattoirs should be put in place to ensure that suspect or infected carcasses are controlled and removed from the food chain. The report also recommends that links between human tuberculosis infection and *M. bovis* should be broadly considered and that the development of validated laboratory methods for the routine examination of various foods for the organism should be established as there was currently no accepted laboratory process that would permit certification of food products as '*M. bovis*-free' or 'free from risk of transmission of zoonotic tuberculosis'.

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Decision News Media SAS

<http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=84610-tuberculosis-ireland-meat>

Twenty-nine cattle culled after bluetongue disease detected

29 cows and calves have been slaughtered as a precautionary measure following a positive test for the bluetongue virus in one imported animal on a farm in Antrim, Ireland. The incident has initiated the launch of an advertising campaign by the Department of Agriculture, reminding farmers to be vigilant and to take suitable precautions. Whilst some seek a ban on the importation of cattle from high-risk regions of Europe, the agriculture minister Michelle Gildernew is reportedly powerless to pursue such action, though encourages all farmers to refrain from importing the animals.

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Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/article3445141.ece>

C.F.I.A. confirms another B.S.E. case in Alberta

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency confirmed an incident of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (B.S.E.) in a six-year-old dairy cow from Alberta. The agency confirmed that no part of the animal had entered the food chain.

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MEATPOULTRY.com

http://www.meatpoultry.com/feature_stories.asp?ArticleID=91571

PROCESS AND PRODUCTION

House flies carry *Salmonella* risk for poultry

Two scientists of the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) found that the common house fly may pose a threat to the safety of poultry products, through its ability to transmit *Salmonella* organisms from hen to hen. The study concentrated on infecting a number of hens in an isolated room, whilst placing fly larvae in open boxes in the same room. Having hatched and been allowed contact with the hens, the flies were then introduced into a room containing uninfected hens. The result was a 38 percent rate of infection of the previously uninfected hens, showing intestinal colonisation with *Salmonella*. Proximity alone was not sufficient to enable the disease to be transmitted from the flies to hens, and the consumption of the flies was proven to be the key. Although further research is required to determine the extent of relationship between flies, *Salmonella* and poultry, the study does indicate that the producers should aim to limit mixing of the three elements.

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Decision News Media SAS

<http://www.meatprocess.com/news/ng.asp?n=84373-ars-poultry-salmonella>

Food safety aspects of different pig housing and husbandry systems - Scientific Opinion of the Panel on Biological Hazards

The European Food Standards Authority (EFSA) panel on Biological Hazards issued a Scientific Opinion on the Food Safety aspects of different pig housing and husbandry systems. The publication offers a dual-edged opinion. In a positive sense, the use of pig production systems based on good/hygienic farming practices and providing optimal animal welfare increases the pigs' resistance to infections and leads to a reduction of the food safety risks associated with the resulting carcasses. However, some on-farm practices that are considered beneficial for pig welfare such as holding in groups, use of bedding, use of non-slippery floors and access to outdoor spaces, may increase risks of exposure to pathogenic organisms and promote a greater survival rate for pathogens. The publication re-iterates that carcasses pose an increasing risk to [food] safety when animals are exposed to risk factors as they draw nearer to slaughter. The underlying conclusion is that practices which promote animal welfare should not be considered in isolation from practices which minimize risks to food safety.

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EFSA

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1178675505797.htm

New US food safety tools target small meat firms

A University of Wisconsin website has introduced resources to assist small meat and poultry processors in implementing HACCP systems. The website contains a broad range of information relating to critical limits, Standard Operating Procedures and corrective actions, as well as interactive tools for evaluating the safety of raw meat or poultry held for a time at abusive temperatures. This initiative complements the work of the International HACCP Alliance, based at the University of Texas, which was formed in 1994 to assist members of the US meat and poultry

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industry in their quest for HACCP implementation. The website may be found at www.meathaccp.wisc.edu

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<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=83519&m=1FNU226&c=hyxurjnrzqfckps>

***Salmonella* problematic in the case of fattening pigs and turkeys, too**

Two German studies examining migration of *Salmonella* amongst turkey flocks and fattening pigs indicate that both turkeys and fattening pigs are potential sources of infection for humans. The study involved 300 fattening turkey flocks and 98 breeding turkey flocks, and whilst breeding turkeys tested negative for *Salmonella*, the fattening turkeys tested positive at a rate of more than 10 percent for *Salmonella* species including *S. enteritidis* and *S. typhimurium*, both causative agents of *Salmonella* infections in humans. A separate study of the intestinal lymph nodes of 2569 fattening pigs showed *Salmonella* infection amongst 326 animals (almost 13 percent), again showing *S. typhimurium* and *S. enteritidis* to be prevalent. The results of both tests indicate that such animals pose a threat of infection to humans, as *Salmonella* from infected animals can migrate to the meat during slaughter and then constitute an infection risk for the people who consume the meat and meat products.

5 Mar 08

NEWSFOOD.com

<http://www.newsfood.com/Articolo/International/2008-03/20080305-Salmonella-problematic-fattening-pigs-turkeys.asp>

MICROBIOLOGY

DuPont and USDA ARS to collaborate on New *E. coli* Test in Beef

New detection methods for *E. coli* 0157:H7 are being developed through a cooperative research and development agreement between the United States Meat Animal Research Center (USMARC) and DuPont Qualicon. The aim is to identify testing mechanisms that can detect the organism at low concentrations. The organism is of great concern even in low concentrations, and can cause severe illness and effects such as hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) and kidney failure. It is a contaminant of major significance to the beef, lamb and pork industry and in the United States was at the centre of a 30 million pound recall of ground beef during 2007.

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CNS Media BV

http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?idNewsMaker=16506&fSite=AO545#xt=pr

EFSA publishes EU *Salmonella* data

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published an Opinion paper on the contribution of different meat categories to food-borne *Salmonella* infections in humans. Whilst raw egg is confirmed as the predominant source of infection, poultry, pork, beef and lamb are also implicated. No particular conclusion about the risk associated with the specific types of meat was made available, however of the 179 *Salmonella* outbreaks reported in 2005, six were linked to beef and two were linked to lamb. The paper also indicated that the largest group linked to

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Salmonella outbreaks was 'Unspecified Meat and Offal'. The incidence in the EU was 40.0 per 100,000 population.

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Decision News Media SAS

<http://www.foodproductiondaily.com/news/ng.asp?n=83452-efsa-salmonella-s-ent>

***Listeria* scare a timely reminder**

New Zealand health professionals have refreshed warnings concerning the risk of listeriosis to pregnant women, the young, the elderly and those with low immunity. Such groups have been advised to reconsider consumption of cold or prepared meats in the wake of the 'Leonards Superior Smallgoods' recall of products in New Zealand, where a number of products were suspected to have been contaminated with *Listeria*. Though the risk of illness from the organism in the incident was described as very low, it may take up to 70 days to exhibit typical signs of infection.

27 Feb 08

Manawatu Standard

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/stuff/eveningstandard/4417909a6502.html>

US regulators to consult public over *E. coli* concerns

In the wake of some of the United States' largest food contamination incidents, the Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS) will have a public meeting on 9- 10 April about reducing the presence of *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw meat stocks. The FSIS will consider evidence indicating that raw beef products contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7 should be recognised as 'adulterated' food products. Following recent recall scares of 188,000 pounds of ground beef, Dr. Richard Raymond (US under secretary for food safety) believes that the US industry and authorities must aim to prevent disease rather than simply respond to outbreaks.

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Decision News Media SAS

<http://www.meatprocess.com/news/ng.asp?n=84330-e-coli-meat-recalls-usda>

PACKAGING AND INGREDIENT TECHNOLOGY

Purac helps cut salt without raising *Listeria* risk

The current trend of reducing salt and sodium levels in processed foods has led to an increase in risk related to microbial contamination. To assist controls in the low-salt environment, Purac has recently released new products that focus on processed meats and ready-to-eat salads, aimed at preventing growth of *Listeria*. Through introduction of potassium salts, sodium may be replaced and with this the preservative effect of salt in food is maintained. Human cases of *Listeriosis* increased by 8.6 per cent in Europe from 2005 to 2006, and ingredient controls are critical for manufacturers of processed foods.

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Decision News Media SAS

<http://www.meatprocess.com/news/ng.asp?n=84539-purac-listeria-salt-reformulation>

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Green tea extracts could be meat preservatives

Green tea contains between 30 and 40 per cent water-extractable polyphenols. These ingredients are currently of interest to Indian scientists from the Defence Food Research Laboratory in Mysore, India. The use of green tea polyphenols to stop the oxidation of fat in meat products is currently under investigation. Since polyphenols inhibit the formation of these lipolytic and proteolytic compounds, there is hope that such component ingredients may extend shelf-life and prevent development of off-flavours.

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Decision News Media SAS

<http://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=83290&m=1FNU218&c=hxyurjnrzqfckps>

MARKETS

MSA: making the world a more tender place

Eating Quality Assured (EQA), a Meat Standards Australia (MSA) program which up until now had been used only in Australia, is to go global. The EQA program was developed by Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) to ensure the eating quality of exported MSA-graded Australian beef, and the trademark may only be used on such product. MLA studies involving 520,000 beef tasting samples and 75,640 consumers in six different countries has concluded that consumer's expectations for eating quality (in terms of tenderness, flavour, juiciness and overall liking) are extremely similar worldwide.

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Meat and Livestock Association (Australia)

<http://www.mla.com.au/TopicHierarchy/News/MediaReleases/MSA++making+the+world+a+more+tender+place.htm?ac=hp>

ENVIRONMENT & WASTE MANAGEMENT

US meat processor recycles waste into biogas

A Nebraska (United States) meat processor is to start recycling waste into biogas in order to reduce fossil fuels use and improve waste management. Microgy, a subsidiary of renewable energy firm Environmental Power, holds an exclusive license in North America for use of proprietary technology that can extract methane gas from animal and other wastes to generate energy. The technology is based on the process of anaerobic digestion, and is reportedly capable of producing energy equivalent to 1.7 million gallons of oil per year in this instance. This will replace approximately 25 per cent of the plant's natural gas consumption.

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<http://www.foodproductiondaily-usa.com/news/ng.asp?n=82427-meat-processor-biogas-waste-management>