



PIRSA Food Safety NEWS

Issue 12 - March 2003

I can remember in 1997, while cooking in a suburban hospital, having a lengthy debate with the other chefs about the introduction of mandatory food safety programs. It looks like the debate may be laid to rest with the coming release of a FRSC consultation paper. The paper seeks public comment on the sectors identified to have mandatory food safety programs. Read on for the latest news. Have a good month.

Barrie Paynter
PIRSA Food Safety Communication Officer

Latest News

Food Safety Programs for Highest Risk Sectors

The Food Regulation Standing Committee (FRSC) will release a consultation paper on **20 March 2003** to seek response to the introduction of mandatory Food Safety Programs (Standard 3.2.1) for areas identified as highest risk.

The paper seeks comment on:

- the introduction of mandatory Food Safety Programs for:
 - producing, harvesting, processing and distributing raw oysters and other bivalves,
 - producing manufactured and fermented meat,
 - catering operations serving food to the general public, and,
 - food service for sensitive populations; and,
- the use of risk profiling as the method of determining the level of food safety risk.

FRSC will make recommendations to the Food Regulation Ministerial Council. If supported the Ministerial Council will make recommendations to Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). If FSANZ supports the proposed methods of food safety

management they will be introduced into current or proposed mandatory standards.

The paper will be available on the Dept of Health and Aging's (DoHA) website at www.foodsecretariat.health.gov.au/consult.htm or through PIRSA's Food Safety website at www.foodsafetysa.com.au or contact Barrie Paynter on 08 8226 0392.

Written submissions to DoHA by Thursday 17 April 2003.

NSW to Create Single Food Agency

The NSW Premier has agreed in-principle to establish a single NSW food regulatory agency.

The strategic shift is in response to recommendations in the s73 Review completed in Nov 2002. The new agency will merge SafeFood NSW with food staff and resources from NSW Health. If established it will be the first through chain food agency in Australia.

More info for Joanne Keune on 02 9295 5871 or www.safefood.com.au

SA Update



Meat Industry Update

NCP Review of Meat Hygiene Act – Cabinet has approved the release of the NCP review and the draft amendments to the Act. These include extending the scope of the Act to cover retail meat processing, and include rabbit within the definition of ‘meat’.

Microbiological baseline survey for Poultry Meat has been completed. The Poultry industry, with support from PIRSA, has commenced microbiological monitoring to validate the auditing process.

Soft spreadable ready to eat sausage – has led a review of the processing of these types of products. Production of this potentially high-risk product is now prohibited unless safe processing can be scientifically validated.

For more info contact Geoff Raven, Manager, PIRSA Food Safety Program on 8207 7871



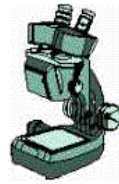
Seafood Industry Update

National Seafood Standard –

During February FSANZ conducted 3 forums to discuss the Seafood Issues paper. The forums were held in Pt Lincoln and Adelaide. Responses to the Issues paper were required by 28/02/03 and will be considered at the Seafood Standards Development Committee meeting on 27/28 March.

Oyster Food Safety Certification - the certification program has now attracted over 60 oysters growers. Ray Coffey from Food Safety Auditing Service recently began audits with 4 businesses attaining certification.

More information and registration forms go to www.foodsafetysa.com.au or contact Paul Dowsett on 8207 7934 or 0427 900 139.



SARDI Update

Green Prawn Survey - SARDI

Food Safety Research has completed the sampling phase of a microbiological food safety survey of Western King Prawns caught and processed by the Spencer Gulf and West Coast Prawn Fishermen's Association.

The survey analysed prawn fishing and processing through chain to the retail sale of green (raw) prawns. It examined the effectiveness of on-board hygiene, such as the sanitation of food contact surfaces and the quality of water used in processing, and analysed samples against the requirements of the Food Standards Code (FSC).

Overall, the survey found:

- No micro organisms of public health significance as assessed against the FSC,
- Processing standards of the boats in the fleet are very high,
- Handling practices in the retail establishments surveyed are generally high.

The findings of this survey indicate that consumers of South Australian green prawns, purchased through retail outlets, can be confident that they satisfy the requirements of SA food safety legislation and the Food Standards Code

For more info please contact Geoff Holds at SARDI Food Safety Research on 8207 7936 or e-mail holds.geoffrey@saugov.sa.gov.au.

Wine = Protection from food poisoning!

Recent research at Oregon State University suggests that wine protects the eater from food poisoning. In simulated testing using a model stomach, sterile baby food, synthetic gastric juices, and cultured bacteria, wine killed all bacteria within an hour. Chardonnay was the most effective killing salmonella in 14 min. and E.coli in 44 min. While Pinot noir took a little longer, 30 min. and 60 min. respectively. The findings have yet to be corroborated with further evidence. The work is scheduled to appear in the Journal of Food Technology. Source: Food Online 13/11/02 www.foodonline.com

National Update

NSW

SafeFood NSW, in consultation with NSW Health, is developing a regulatory food safety scheme for the goat and sheep milk sectors. Pathogen testing of some 500 samples during the next 2 years is being conducted to generate data to support a risk assessment.

Safe Food NSW has certified HACCP systems for all licensed oyster farmers in NSW. Generic HACCP manuals have been prepared for oyster processors with an implementation assist program commencing during March.

More info for Joanne Keune on 02 9295 5871 or www.safefood.com.au

Tasmania

The Tasmanian State Government is setting up a formal food safety group, which will collaboratively manage the regulation of the primary food production chain in Tasmania.

The Departments of Primary Industries, Water and Environment and Health and Human Services, together with the Tasmanian Dairy Industry Authority, will establish the interagency group.

Its primary objectives will be the production of safe food and the maintenance of public health and safety.

More info at <http://www.media.tas.gov.au/release.php?id=7630>

Food Poisoning Victim Sues

Melbourne: Legal action has been lodged against the Footscray restaurant allegedly responsible for a food poisoning incident in January. The action seeks compensation primarily on the grounds of negligence. 195 people became ill and one died in the incident. Source ABS News 3/2/03

WA

WA Dept of Agriculture has released a publication titled, ***Guidelines for the Management of Microbial Food Safety in Fruit Packing Houses.***

The guideline has been developed to assist packinghouse operators in the practical application of good agricultural, hygienic and manufacturing practices to manage and control microbial food safety hazards.

It is available from Josephine Brown on 089 368 3710 at a cost of \$25.

FSANZ Update

The Australian Total Diet Survey is Australia's most comprehensive assessment of consumers' dietary exposure to pesticide residues, contaminants and other substances. The 20th survey was conducted during 00/01 with the results published in January 2003.

The survey results confirm the overall safety of the Australian food supply and demonstrate that residues, metals and selected antibiotics, aflatoxins and ochratoxins are either absent or present in low amounts.

Publications - During Feb FSANZ released

- Food Standards News no 43, info on
 - o Baltic fish products in Australia
 - o Seafood Standard development
- Facts Sheets on
 - o Milk: Part of a balanced diet

The full report and the publications are available at www.foodstandards.gov.au

Contact us for more information

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