



What a topical conversation piece food poisoning is. Everybody seems to have at least one food poisoning horror story that they're only too keen to share. Over the Mother's day weekend I was in, or overheard, 4 different conversations about food poisoning. Each of these involved at least 4 people telling their personal horror story. People really seem to think hard about what made them sick and why. I suppose just as our food safety systems are improving so to is consumer understanding of food borne illness and expectations of safe product. Just to parallel consumers we have to keep improving, and to actually get in front of consumers we have to improve a lot.

Thanks to those 20 odd people who sent back the survey attached with the last newsletter. I'd love to get some more responses. Send them in people. Read on for the latest news.

**Barrie Paynter**  
**PIRSA Food Safety Communication Officer**

## Latest News

### **Dairy Authority seeks comment on Vic Code**

The Dairy Authority of SA has recently written to dairy industry stakeholders seeking comment on the proposal to adopt the *Victorian Code of Practice for Dairy Food Safety*. The proposed Code will replace existing standards and codes of practice and become a condition of licence for all sectors of the SA dairy industry.

The Dairy Authority believes the introduction of the Victorian Code will further improve the safety, quality and marketability of SA dairy products by making SA standards uniform with current Victorian standards. The Victorian dairy industry is the largest in Australia and there is considerable movement of dairy products between South Australia and Victoria.

The Code sets the minimum mandatory standards for the production, manufacture, storage and transport of milk and dairy foods to safeguard public health. It requires all dairy

farms, milk carriers, dairy produce processors and dairy produce distributors to have an approved food safety program. The requirements of an approved food safety program are set out in the Code.

The introduction of the Victorian Code in SA supports the anticipated development by FSANZ of a National Primary Production and Processing Standard for dairy.

Copies of the Code are available from the Dairy Authority, 33 Hutt St Adelaide or phone 08 8223 2277.

The Authority would appreciate your written support or comments **before Friday 13 June 2003 to enable the implementation of the Code from 1 July 2003.**

Copies can also be obtained on the new Dairy page on the PIRSA Food Safety web site at [www.foodsafetysa.com.au/](http://www.foodsafetysa.com.au/).

For more information contact the Dairy Authority of SA on 08 8223 2277.

## SA Update



### Meat Industry Update

**Changes to Auditing Arrangements** - The Agreement between the Minister and FQS to provide audits to the meat industry was due to expire in January 2004. A decision to bring that date forward has been made after a recommendation from the MHU, which has been supported by the Minister's Meat Hygiene Advisory Council. Subsequently, the Minister and FQS have mutually agreed to an early finish to the current audit contract.

Meat Hygiene Officers have commenced a thorough review of the audit requirements of the meat industry. The review will make recommendations about how future audit requirements will be satisfied.

The Meat Hygiene Unit (MHU) will now undertake the auditing of the domestic meat industry that has previously been carried out by Food Quality Systems (FQS), on behalf of the Minister.

FQS has provided an excellent service to industry and Government that is reflected in industry performance trends and in comments made by accredited operators. The South Australian Meat Hygiene Advisory Council also acknowledges the high level of service provided by Food Quality Systems to the domestic meat industry.

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



### Seafood Industry Update

**National Seafood Standard** – FSANZ and the Seafood SDC are developing a Draft Assessment Report, which will be released for public comment late in 2003. The Draft Assessment Report will examine the available options and their regulatory impact and will recommend a preferred regulatory option.

A parallel process of consultation with industry, consumer and regulatory stakeholders will occur during the development of the Draft Assessment. This will take the form of public meetings and communication through a range of industry and stakeholder publications and media.

A working group has been established to produce Drafting Instructions. The group plans to present these to the SDC at the 30/31 July meeting.

**SA Smoked Seafood Operations** – PIRSA has recently reviewed food safety arrangements of SA smoked seafood manufacturers. One manufacturer of cold smoked seafood and 4 manufacturers of hot smoked seafood were identified. Three of the operations have audited food safety programs and PIRSA is working with the other two to assist in the implementing of food safety programs.

For more information contact Paul Dowsett on 8207 7934 or 0427 900 139.



### Horticulture Industry Update

**Unpasteurised Juices** – PIRSA has surveyed the juice industry and identified 1 manufacturer of unpasteurised juices. The business has an audited food safety program.

For more information contact Paul Dowsett on 8207 7934 or 0427 900 139.

#### SA Food Illness Settlement

The Advertiser reports that provisional settlement has been granted for an out-of-court settlement for 60 people who contracted food poisoning at a Glenelg restaurant last year.

The action was conducted on behalf of those 70 people who contracted Salmonella after eating contaminated Caesar salad. The victims could receive between \$5000 and \$100 000.

Source: The Advertiser 23/5/03

## DHS Update

During April letters were posted to almost 100 primary industry groups and associations offering a free **food safety video** and an opportunity to work with DHS to develop a **food safety information sheet** specific to industry needs. DHS received many responses and are busy progressing this project.

The **online food business notification** web site is expected to be operational in July. The address of the site is [www.fbn.sa.gov.au](http://www.fbn.sa.gov.au) Food businesses are required to notify by 1 December 2003. Primary producers (per Food Act definition) are not required to notify.

The statewide **Food Safety Implementation Working Group (FSIWG)**, which has been in recess for some months, is to be reactivated to provide a forum to improve coordination of government (all levels) wide activities in relation to food safety within SA. Membership of the group includes DHS, LGA, AIEH, PIRSA, AQIS, Dairy Authority of SA, Transport SA, DETE, and BMT (Business Manufacturing & Trade).

The next meeting has been scheduled for 4/6/03. The agenda includes a review of the terms of reference of the FSIWG, an update on the Food Safety Reform Program, progress of the inter-departmental incidence response plan, recommendations from the review of food safety inspection regimes and other items.

For more information on DHS articles contact to Viv on 8226 7165 or Mandy 8226 7133.

## National Update

### SafeFood QLD

The April edition of Production Lines, SafeFood Qld's monthly newsletter, updates the development of Qld's Food Safety Schemes for Seafood and Eggs.

View the newsletter at <http://www.safefood.qld.gov.au/home/default.htm>

## FSANZ Update

1. FSANZ has released an update paper on the development of the National Seafood Standard.
2. An importer of roquefort raw milk cheese had a hearing on 1 April 2003 to try to overturn the FSANZ decision to ban its import on the grounds of public health and safety. A decision will be handed down shortly.

FSANZ reports and publications are available at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

### Food safety critical for US Agriculture

US agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman identified strong food safety systems as one of 5 critical areas in shaping the future of agriculture in the US.

Ms Veneman believes competing successfully in the future hinges on the safety of the US food supply. The President reportedly shares this belief and has proposed record funding for meat and poultry food safety programs as well as funding increases to strengthen agricultural protection systems.

The USDA has declared 'war on pathogens' and this is reflected by a 20% increase in the food safety budget since President Bush came to office.

Ms Veneman went on to say that funding should be apart of the US permanent budget and the agriculture community should become more proactive to ensure they become part of mandatory spending in future years.

Source: Animal Pharm no 513

### Contact us for more information

Barrie Paynter Ph. 8226 0392  
[paynter.barrie2@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:paynter.barrie2@saugov.sa.gov.au)

Chris Etherton Ph. 8226 0531  
[etherton.chris@saugov.sa.gov.au](mailto:etherton.chris@saugov.sa.gov.au)

Newsletters archived under publications at [www.foodsafetysa.com.au/](http://www.foodsafetysa.com.au/)

Next issue 20 June 2003.

## PIRSA Food Safety Communication Survey

PIRSA aims to communicate relevant food safety information to industry and government leaders to assist them to:

- make informed decisions about food safety issues, and,
- communicate relevant food safety issues to their members and stakeholder.

Two of the strategies used by PIRSA are:

- the PIRSA Food Safety NEWS letter, and,
- the PIRSA 'food safety sa' website

The purpose of this survey is to measure the effectiveness of these two strategies and identify areas for improvement.

### PIRSA Food Safety NEWS

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 1. Is the newsletter a valuable source of food safety information?      | Yes/No           |
| 2. Do you send the newsletter to your members or other stakeholders?    | Yes/No           |
| 3. Do you send selected articles to your members or other stakeholders? | Yes/No           |
| 4. Should the articles contain more information?                        | Yes/No           |
| 5. Is monthly appropriate<br>If no, less often?                         | Yes/No<br>Yes/No |
| 6. Is the presentation and format easy to read?                         | Yes/No           |

### PIRSA Food Safety Web site – [www.foodsafetysa.com.au](http://www.foodsafetysa.com.au)

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|--|--------|
| 7. Have you visited the website?   | Yes/No |
| 8. Will you visit the site again?  | Yes/No |
| 9. Would you promote the web site to your members or other stakeholders?   | Yes/No |
| 10. What other information would you like to see available on the website: |        |
| • Fact sheets  | Yes/No |
| • Research/scientific papers   | Yes/No |
| • Statistics   | Yes/No |
| • Industry specific information  | Yes/No |
| • Other...   | Yes/No |

How could PIRSA Food Safety communication be improved? Any other comments?

To reply copy the questions into a reply email to me and select your responses or fax 8226 1844 or post to Barrie Paynter, Food Safety Communication Officer, GPO Box 1671, Adelaide 5001

Many thanks.