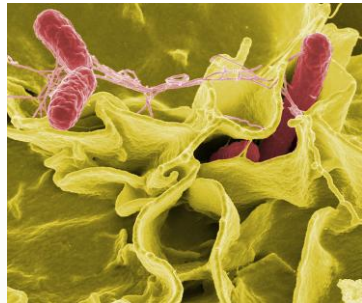


August 2010

Salmonella Draft Compliance Policy Issued by FDA



The Food and Drug Administration published an announcement in the August 2nd *Federal Register* regarding a Compliance Policy Guide (CPG) on *Salmonella* in feed and pet food.

FDA states that *Salmonella* found in pet food will be deemed to be adulterated, as it is handled in the home and can be pathogenic to those handling it. For feed, only those feeds containing *Salmonella strains pathogenic* for animals will be considered adulterants or only if contact with humans is likely to be a problem, such as at a zoo or agricultural fair.

The CPG moves FDA closer to the position held by the Northeast Ag and Feed Alliance that *Salmonella* testing needs to implicate specific serotypes and amounts before deeming feed to be adulterated for animal use. Feed Alliance leaders met with FDA officials last December to press the arguments and inform the agency that their lack of action on releasing canola meal shipments was costing Northeast dairy farmers \$350,000 per day.

The American Feed Industry Association (AFIA) has worked aggressively on this issue. “AFIA for many years has urged FDA to separate how the agency polices *Salmonella* in food and feed, and we applaud this separation. Now, *Salmonella* found in feed will not always be deemed adulterated, which is a break with the past and a good break,” said AFIA Vice President Richard Sellers

Just prior to the recent Association of American Feed Control Officials’ 101st Annual Meeting in Portland, Oregon, FDA’s Center for Veterinary Medicine’s Dr. Dan McChesney, director of surveillance and compliance, told the AFIA Feed Regulatory Committee that the FDA will ask companies to recall feed found contaminated with the specific *Salmonella* strains, and if the feed has been fed, FDA will report to USDA that animals have been fed contaminated feed. USDA is responsible for regulation of meat and poultry.

A 90-day comment period has been initiated for the CPG. AFIA’s committees will review this guide and offer comments to FDA. Of concern, is the lack of an infectious dose of *Salmonella* listed in the CPG. Said Sellers, “We will be talking with USDA’s Agriculture Research Service about better defining the level that’s considered infectious. I’ve never seen some of these specific *Salmonella* serotypes in feed, but even if found, the levels will likely be very low and will not cause disease.”

In early September Alliance treasurer Al Ames and board member Josh Poulin will meet with staff from Vermont congressman, Peter Welch, to discuss this issue in detail.

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New York State Senate Defeats the Omnibus Farmworker Labor Bill

Feed Alliance joined in coalition to fight serious threat

On August 3 the New York State Senate voted down a farmworker reform bill following years of political debate. The bill mandated overtime payments for all farmworkers, allowed for collective bargaining, required small farms to contribute to the state's unemployment insurance system and required a mandatory day of rest. Northeast Ag and Feed Alliance President John Mitchell stated that the Alliance aggressively worked with a broad coalition of opponents to defeat this bill. "We know how devastating this legislation would have been on New York farmers," said Mitchell. "Our industry cannot tolerate the additional costs and farmers do not have the luxury of passing increased production costs to consumers."

Farm owners across the state opposed the bill, stating it would drive farmworkers needed to harvest crops to other states for jobs. They also believed it would cost farmers millions of dollars statewide, which could cause some farmers to go out of business.

"By killing this bill once and for all, Albany has shown a commitment to the future of farming and the Upstate rural economy," said Dean Norton, president of New York Farm Bureau. "Had this bill gone through, it would have seriously damaged the ability of our local farms to produce local food for local people."

An earlier version of the bill was soundly defeated April 21 in the Senate Agriculture Committee. Similar legislation in California was vetoed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger last month.

The bill defeated in New York in early August was identical to the bill killed previously, and didn't even receive a hearing in the Senate Agriculture Committee, even though it was aimed wholly at the farm industry. "Certain Senate leaders tried to circumvent a review of this bill by the committee that represents the constituency most affected by it," Norton said. "Sneaky parliamentary procedure was no match for the obvious flaws in this legislation and the massive negative impact it would have on family farms if it passed."

The Labor Religion Coalition of New York State expressed disappointment over the defeat and expressed resolve to continue lobbying for agricultural labor reform despite losing several key sponsors including Senator Craig Johnson, Democrat of Long Island, who was listed as a sponsor of the Farmworker Fair Labor Practices Act earlier this year and not only voted against the bill - but apparently organized support against it.

EPA Proposes One Year Compliance Data Extension on Spill Prevention Rule

Animal fats and vegetable oils get reprieve

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced on July 30 that it is proposing to extend the compliance date by one year for certain facilities subject to recent amendments to the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) rule. In the same announcement, the agency also stated that certain facilities will not be eligible for the one-year extension and will have to comply by the current date of November 10, 2010.

The purpose of the SPCC rule, which was finalized in 1973, is to establish requirements for facilities to prevent a discharge of oil into navigable waters or adjoining shorelines. In the announcement, EPA divided the facilities into two categories, those not eligible for the extension and those that are eligible for the extension.

Included in the proposed one year extension are, food manufacturing, and manufacturing facilities using and storing animal fats and vegetable oils. This announcement will extend the date by which the owners or operators of these must prepare or amend and implement an SPCC plan by one year to November 10, 2011

This extension will also delay the compliance date for facilities with milk containers that are constructed according to the current applicable 3-A sanitary standards, and subject to the current applicable grade "A" pasteurized milk ordinance (PMO) or a state dairy regulatory requirement equivalent. Compliance will not take effect until one year after the EPA finalizes a rule for these facilities.

AFIA has worked very closely with EPA over the past several years to provide valuable information about the safe use of animal fat and vegetable oils used in the industry. By providing technical data, meeting one-on-one with EPA and opening up an AFIA member facility to demonstrate the many safety features used by the industry to ensure the safe use of products, EPA has made several changes to the rule to date that have saved the industry thousands of dollars in unneeded costs.

Alliance Vice President Whitman Meets with New England Ag Commissioners

On August 12th Alliance Vice President Art Whitman accompanied by the Alliance Government Relations Director, Louise Calderwood, met with staff from the New Hampshire and Connecticut departments of agriculture to discuss issues of mutual concern. The animated discussions and long list of topics confirmed the importance of the Alliance's work on immigration reform, transportation, state-federal relations, and food safety legislation. Whitman stated "Visiting with the commissioners confirms the importance of the Alliance legislative and regulatory relations efforts and the value of meetings such as this."

In Connecticut the Alliance met with Commissioner Phil Prelli; Dr. Bruce Sherman the Director of Investigation and Regulation; Wayne Kasacek, the Assistant Director of Investigation and Regulation; and the Agricultural Marketing and Inspection Representative, Wayne Nelson. Of particular concern to the Connecticut personnel is the impending application of "Chesapeake Bay Standards" for dissolved oxygen, water clarity and Chlorophyll A to other bodies of water including the Connecticut and Hudson Rivers. Application of the Chesapeake Bay Standards will have a profound impact on agricultural practices in New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Connecticut. Adoption of the Chesapeake Standards will require revised methods for agricultural nitrogen management.

Later in the day Whitman and Calderwood met with New Hampshire Commissioner Lorraine Stuart-Merrill and Richard Uncles, Director of the Division of Regulatory Services. During the 2010 legislative session New Hampshire developed two study committees addressing the use of biotechnology in crop production. One study committee will focus on seed labeling. NOFA-NH has expressed the opinion that biotechnology labeling laws enacted in four states (including Vermont) are not sufficient to meet consumer "right to know standards." The second study committee will address concerns regarding potential for drift of genetically altered pollen. The New Hampshire Department of Agriculture and the anti-GMO activists disagree about whether organic and non-GMO corn grown in New Hampshire would cross contaminate with genetically modified corn. Non-GMO activists in New Hampshire have challenged the science based approach supported by the Department and successfully lobbied for development of the study committees.

Agriculture department staff in Connecticut and New Hampshire shared concerns about recent changes in USDA's approach to animal traceability by moving accountability for program development to the state level without concomitant funding for implementation. Development of animal traceability will impact the movement of animals across state lines and it has been suggested that the current inspection exemptions for animals moving to slaughter will be reconsidered. A national conference is scheduled for August 30-31 and it is hoped many questions on the creation of animal traceability programs will be answered.

The development of more stringent standards for utilization of the H2A visa program is creating problems for agricultural employers of seasonal labor. Normally the H2A program is considered of most use to vegetable producers and other "green industry" farmers such as turf farms and nurseries. However with changes to the farms (requiring year round labor in many cases) and changes to the H2A application process, the visas are becoming decreasingly useful. Coupled with the ongoing concerns of dairy producers for the use of foreign labor it is clear that immigration reform continues to be top priority for all agricultural producers.

In mid September Whitman and Calderwood will drive to the Eastern States Exposition to meet with Commissioner Soares of Massachusetts and Commissioner Bradstreet of Maine.

What Is The Cornell Dairy Executive Program (CDEP)?

- An educational program in leadership and management principles for progressive dairy executives
- Focuses on four different areas within the business of dairy:
 - Financial Management
 - Business Operations and Strategic Planning
 - Human Resource Management
 - Risk Management
- Takes place over one year in three, multi-day sessions which build upon each other

After attending this class you will have developed:

- 1 and 5-year strategic business plans
- Leadership and management skills
- A comprehensive self-evaluation of your business
- A network of dairy executives
- A plan for building business relationships

Do you know someone who should attend?

For further information visit: www.ansci.cornell.edu/prodairy/dairyexec

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NORTHEAST AG & FEED NEWS

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Vermont Feed Dealers and Dairy Industry Associations Co-hosting 2010 Conference

The VT Feed Dealers and the Vermont Dairy Industry Association are presenting their annual conferences, September 22 and 23 at the Double Tree Inn in S. Burlington, Vermont. On Wednesday the Feed Dealers are hosting a golf outing beginning at 7:30 at the Williston Golf Course. Club rentals are available for \$80, lunch is on your own. Contact Travis Lehoullier at tlehoullier@abbinc.biz for golf details.

On Wednesday, from 8:30 to 4:30 the Vermont Dairy Industry Association will hold their conference with a range of topics including milk flavor with Pat Cleary (retired, St. Albans Cooperative Creamery), industry trends with Ed Pcolar of Agri-mark, animal welfare assurance programs with Leon Graves, DMS, milk pricing and policy with Bob Wellington of Agri-Mark, and dairy product food safety issues with Paul Kindstedt, UVM. These topics should be of interest to all in the dairy industry from producer to processor.

A dairy industry reception will be held at the Double Tree Inn on Wednesday evening from 5:30 to 7:30. On Thursday the VT Feed Dealers Association will present a full day of dairy risk management information. Richard Sellars, VP of the American Feed Industry Association will discuss Feed Safety and Risk Management: How Congress Plans to Help You. Gordy Elliott of the F.C Stone Corp will provide an overview of managing commodity volatility and dairy pricing risk. Eugene Gantz of USDA Risk Management will discuss the use of USDA dairy insurance as a floor for income over feed cost. Gary F. Sipiorski will facilitate a panel of agricultural credit providers to discuss their approaches to risk management. Partial funding for the conference has been provided by USDA RMA.

Registration materials are available on the Alliance website's homepage at: http://www.northeastalliance.com/general_files/2010%20VFD%20Complete%20Information.pdf. For more information contact Louise Calderwood at 802-586-2239 or rcalderwod@aol.com.

Welcome New Members!

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Tyler Buettner North Central Companies
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Stephen Blezinger Trouw Nutrition
Phone: 903-885-7992 Email: sblez@verizon.net



NEAFA Calendar of Events

**NEAFA Board of Directors
Strategic Planning Meeting**
September 13-14, 2010
Albany, New York

**The Transition Cow:
Biology and Management**
September 20-23, 2010
The I-Hotel
Champaign, Illinois
More Info: www.adsa.org/discover

NEAFA Board of Directors Meeting
September 22, 2010
South Burlington, Vermont

VT Feed Dealers Annual Conference
September 22-23, 2010
Double Tree Conference Center
South Burlington, Vermont

Cornell Dairy Executive Program
December 5-9, 2010
February 20-24, 2011
December 4-8, 2011
The Statler Hotel & Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

Mobile Cheese Plant Funded Through Good Works Program



*Mike Tetreault, Alliance board member as well as VP of Poulin Grain and board member of the Orleans County Fair makes cheddar cheese curds at the fair in Barton, Vermont.
(Photo provided by the Burlington Free Press)*

On August 18th the Orleans County Fair in Barton, Vermont launched a new mobile cheese processing facility to demonstrate cheese making and to sell cheddar cheese curds produced with milk from cows being shown at the fair. The cheese unit was purchased with funding from many sources including the Northeast Ag and Feed Alliance's Good Works Program and the Vermont Feed Dealers and Manufacturers Association. The 8 oz packages of cheese curds quickly sold out each day of production. The mobile processing facility is available for use at other fairs throughout the northeast. For more information contact Mike Tetreault at: 802-334-6731