

Preparing for the Future

with the industry's Code of Practice

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Events over the past few years have spawned a plethora of new food safety regulations along with customer concern and consumer suspicion. The extensive and unfortunate melamine contamination of pet food was followed with several high profile human food recalls. In the midst of this industry-unfriendly climate, Congress passed the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Amendments Act of 2007 that mandated FDA to develop and implement the Reportable Food Registry, which requires the quick reporting of contaminated food, pet food, and livestock feed that would result in Class I recalls. Then on July 30, 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Food Safety Enhancement Act of 2009.

FDA continues work on a food safety system that may mandate manufacturing practices to also apply to animal feed ingredients. Pet food manufacturers are currently looking very closely at all ingredients, and all sectors of food production are looking into third party certification of inputs. All of this, combined with a new administration very prone to new regulation and industry restrictions, makes anyone in the rendering industry apprehensive about how to profitably cope in the future.

The rendering industry clearly understands its role in the safe and nutritious production of animal feed ingredients and has done it very effectively for over 100 years. In a mode of proactive foresight, the U.S. rendering industry five years

ago developed and approved a voluntary North American Rendering Industry Code of Practice. The purpose was to promote the safety of animal proteins and rendered fats for feed use through the establishment of process controls and accreditation to verify the controls are in place. The Code of Practice has turned out to be much more than that – it has become the industry's best preparation for new expectations of both customers and regulators.

Renderers, fat recyclers, and protein blenders can enhance feed safety by implementing controls to prevent, eliminate, or reduce product safety hazards. The Code of Practice program involves employee training and recordkeeping, followed by independent third party audits to ensure plants are adhering to their own plans. A company can go a long way to allay the concerns of customers and regulators when it shows that plant workers and managers have written plans to ensure product safety and are expected and proven to follow those plans.

Code of Practice certification is valid for two years, at which time plants re-certify with another third party audit and re-examination of the processes in place. The code is updated from time to time to reflect new regulations or new information on how to best produce safe rendered products. Rendering industry research continues to support the program and to further refine documentation available to renderers on cooking temperatures and other important manufacturing practices.

Each plant develops its own process control plan based on the raw materials used and the products made. A plant's plan is similar to a hazard analysis and critical control point program in that it identifies possible hazards; determines whether physical, biological, and chemical hazards exist; and establishes ways to monitor and control them within appropriate standards. Accurate records, product traceability, and documentation are also required. The industry also supports the adoption and use of the Code of Practice through continuing education and training certification programs offered annually.

To date, about 100 rendering plants have been certified as following appropriate process controls for their plant (see list at right). The National Renderers Association (NRA) estimates these 100 certified plants produce more than 90 percent of the rendered products in North America.

NRA will continue to work with agriculture, food, and feed coalitions to do as much as possible to stave off unnecessary regulation. However, customers such as animal feed and pet food manufacturers, and the ultimate purchaser of consumer products, still have their own increasing expectations. The Code of Practice not only prepares companies to comply with tomorrow's regulations, but can put them in a better position to continue to sell products both domestically and internationally. **R**

Code of Practice for *Salmonella* Control Published in UK

In the United Kingdom (UK), the revised Code of Practice for the Control of *Salmonella* in Animal Feeds was published on November 4, 2009, in partnership with the Department of Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs and the Food Standards Agency. The main purpose of the code is to provide information on best practices, and to help those involved in the manufacture, storage, and transport of feeds to minimize the risk of *Salmonella* contamination.

To assist users, the code brings together in one document the advice that was previously dispersed in three codes and has been updated after an extensive consultation of stakeholders. It has also been considered and endorsed by the independent Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs.

The code is voluntary but the guidance it contains reflects recent legislative developments, including the requirements of the European Commission Zoonoses Regulation 2160/2003 and the Feed Hygiene Regulation 183/2005. The code is available at www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/committee/copsal.pdf. **R**

Plants certified in the North American Rendering Industry Code of Practice as of November 1, 2009

New plants are continually added to the list of certified plants, which can be found on the NRA Web site at http://nationalrenderers.org/biosecurity_app/icode/certified_plants.

American Proteins, Inc. Alma, GA Cummings, GA Cuthbert, GA Hanceville, AL	Darling International (cont'd) Des Moines, IA Fairfax, MO Indianapolis, IN Kansas City, KS Lynn Center, IL Mason City, IL Omaha, NE Sioux City, IA So. Omaha, NE Wahoo, NE Wichita, KS Kansas City, KS Little Rock, AR	Griffin Industries, Inc.-Bakery Feeds Division Albertville, AL Butler, KY Doswell, VA Henderson, KY Honeybrook, PA Marshville, NC Watts, OK	Rothsay (Canada) Truro, NS Winnipeg, MB Dundas, ON Moorefield, ON Hickson, ON Ville Ste. Catherine, QB
Baker Commodities, Inc. Billerica, MA Kerman, CA Los Angeles, CA Rochester, NY	Farmland Foods, Inc. Crete, NE Denison, IA Monmouth, IL	Hormel Foods Austin, MN Fremont, NE	Sanimax Green Bay, WI South St. Paul, MN
Cargill Meat Solutions, Inc. Beardstown, IL Dodge City, KS Friona, TX Ottumwa, IA	Griffin Industries, Inc. Bastrop, TX Butler, KY Columbus, IN East Dublin, GA Ellenwood, GA Holden, LA Jackson, MS Russellville, KY Union City, TN Starke, FL Tampa, FL Newberry, IN	JBS Swift and Company Green Bay, WI Toleson, AZ	Smithfield Packing Company Smithfield, VA Tar Heel, NC
Carolina By-Products Gastonia, NC Ward, SC Wadesboro, NC Rose Hill, NC		John Morrell Animal Feeds Sioux City, IA	Tyson Foods, Inc.-River Valley Animal Foods Clarksville, AR Harmony, NC Robards, KY Scranton, AR Sedalia, MO Temperanceville, VA Texarkana, AR
Central Bi-Products Long Prairie, MN North Redwood Falls, MN		John Morrell and Company Sioux City, IA Sioux Falls, SD	Tyson Foods, Inc.-Specialty Products Division Sequin, TX
Clougherty Packing-Farmer John Los Angeles, CA		Mendota Agri-Products, Inc. Mendota, IL	Valley Proteins, Inc. Amarillo, TX East Earl, PA Linville, VA Strawberry Plains, TN Winchester, VA
Darling International, Inc. Alton, IA Blue Earth, MN Clinton, IA Denver, CO		National Beef Packing Company, LLC Brawley, CA Dodge City, KS Liberal, KS	
		Perdue Fats and Proteins Accomac, VA Lewiston, NC	