

Food Safety Sentinel

Quarterly newsletter for Alberta Agriculture and Forestry's provincially licensed meat facility operators

Control Measures to Help Minimize *E. coli* O157:H7 in your Meat Plant

The 2014 outbreak of *E. coli* O157:H7 associated with pork was the largest *E. coli* outbreak in Canada since Walkerton, Ontario, with 119 confirmed cases. Since that time, there have been two additional *E. coli* outbreaks associated with pork products in Alberta. One was reported in January 2016 and was linked to ready-to-eat sausage, and the other was linked to pork dumplings in April 2016. Some provincially licensed abattoirs (PLAs) have been associated with these outbreaks and had to perform a recall.

In light of these outbreaks, we encourage all red meat PLAs to consider implementing the steps listed below to minimize the risk of contamination of red meat with *E. coli* O157:H7.

1. Ensure proper dressing procedures are followed in a manner to prevent the contamination of carcasses and other meat products.
2. Ensure Good Manufacturing and Personnel Hygiene Practices are followed in a manner to prevent the contamination of carcasses/meat products with biological hazards.
3. Prevent airborne contamination of the meat products, especially carcasses.
4. Use at least one pathogen-reduction intervention (e.g. antimicrobial spray, steam/hot water pasteurization).
5. Operators must comply with carcass cooling performance requirements.
6. Ensure conditions under which the carcasses are stored and transported are satisfactory.

Operators may also choose to:

- Talk to producers and transporters on pre-harvest practices aimed at reducing *E. coli* O157:H7 in live animals presented for slaughter.
- Pay close attention to the cleanliness of animals (i.e. mud scoring) at live animal receiving and use this information to determine appropriate control steps (e.g. add more trimmers to the production line).
- Use appropriate trimming procedures to remove visible contamination.

Reference:

From the CFIA's Meat Hygiene Manual of Procedures, Chapter 4 bit.ly/1Ufat9H

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We are here to help!

Useful Website Links

Growing Forward 2 Food Safety Systems Processor Program is Accepting Applications



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We are Here to Help!

Over the past three years, there has been a marked increase of PLAs choosing to implement an antimicrobial spray intervention step and some of these facilities have incorporated recommendations provided by the Meat Inspection Section. For more information, please speak to your regional Meat Facility Extension Specialist.

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We've added useful resources to our website!

A list of antimicrobial processing aids used on meat and poultry surfaces approved by Health Canada:

bit.ly/1YuYLYn

Antimicrobial Spray Treatment of Red Meat in Small Abattoirs Fact Sheet:

Bit.ly/1YuYLYn

(or go to agriculture.alberta.ca and search for "antimicrobial spray treatment").



Growing Forward 2 Food Safety Systems Processor Program

The program is designed to help food processors invest in new or to improve existing food safety systems and production practices.

- Non-capital expenses (50% supported) related to the development and implementation of food safety programs (e.g. staff training, consultant costs, food safety audits).
- Capital expenses (20% supported) related to improving a specific food safety issue (e.g. antimicrobial spray equipment and start-up chemical, facility upgrades, utensils and bins approved for food use, sanitation equipment, and traceability systems).
- Food safety testing equipment (80% supported) is eligible to a maximum of \$5,000.

For program details, a funding list and application form, please visit the Growing Forward 2 website or call **310-FARM** (3276). Growing Forward 2 is a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Did you know?

The Growing Forward 2 Food Safety Systems Processor Program will fund 20% of the cost for antimicrobial spray equipment and the start-up chemical.

