

Food Safety Sentinel

Issue 5

Quarterly Newsletter for Alberta Agriculture's Provincially Licensed Meat Operators

Meat Inspection Modernization

Shifting Focus: Future programs and activities

What does meat inspection modernization mean?

"Modernization" means updating, and so "meat inspection modernization" means exactly what it sounds like—updating meat inspection.

Why is Alberta Agriculture updating their meat inspection, and what will it look like?

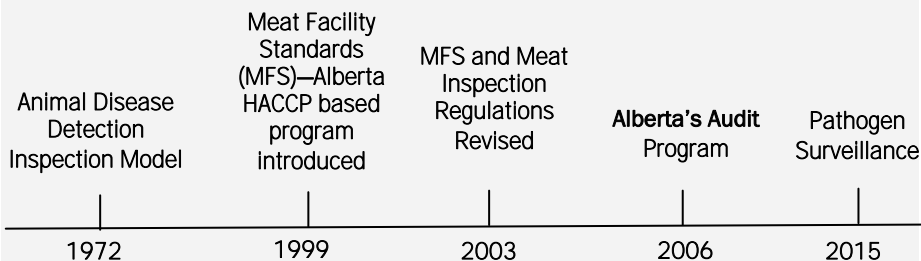
The current meat inspection model was developed more than 40 years ago and is based on the model of animal disease detection, as animal disease was considered one of the most significant risks to food safety. To detect disease in animals, the inspection model relies on organoleptic inspection (sight, smell, touch). Today, our understanding of risks to food safety has changed and science shows that pathogens (*E. coli*, *Listeria sp.*, *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter sp.*) are the greatest risk to food safety. Pathogens cannot be seen, smelled or detected through traditional meat inspection, and therefore we are increasing our scope to include pathogen surveillance (swabbing) in the way we inspect meat.

Will organoleptic (using sight, smell, touch, etc.) inspections still be performed to detect disease?

Yes. Animal disease inspections have been done for over 40 years and will continue, but in addition swabbing for pathogens, known as surveillance, will be also be performed.

When will this all start to happen?

Alberta Agriculture and Forestry is in the process of hiring a surveillance scientist. Once this person is hired, additional planning will need to take place and then activities will follow. We will continue to communicate openly so you are aware of activities in advance.



A timeline of how Alberta Agriculture and Forestry's meat inspection has evolved.

If you have any questions, please contact Darlene Dittrich, Director of the Meat Inspection Branch at darlene.dittrich@gov.ab.ca or call 780-427-6815, dial 310-0000 toll free in Alberta.

IN THIS ISSUE

Fly and Insect Season is Here:
Things to consider to help reduce insect pest activity in and around your facility.....2

Specified Risk Material (SRM) Requirements.....2

Alberta Pork Continues to Work Traceability.....3

SAIT Polytechnic: Practical, hands-on learning to meet industry demand.....4

Sanitation Reminders.....4



Summer 2015

**Alberta Agriculture and Forestry
Food Safety & Animal Welfare Division**

Lethbridge Research Centre
5403—1 Avenue South
Lethbridge, AB T1J 4B1
T. 403-388-3189 F. 403-382-3156
Toll free dial 310-0000 within Alberta

kimberly.comeau@gov.ab.ca

www.agriculture.alberta.ca/foodsafety

Fly and Insect Season is Here

Things to consider to help reduce insect pest activity in and around your facility

Insect pests can be a major problem for food production facilities, especially in the warmer months. They can cause contamination of meat products, ingredients and packaging materials.

Examples that may increase insect activity:

- Buildup of manure and debris within the barn and corral areas
- Pooling of water inside and outside the facility (including roof puddles)
- Tall grass or weeds growing outside close to the facility
- Outside lighting shining directly over entrances
- Buildup of garbage within the facility and outside disposal area

Examples to help keep insect pests out of your facility:

- Screens on doors and windows should be kept in good condition and properly fit around frames
- Weather-stripping or seals should be in good condition around entry doors and loading dock doors. You shouldn't see any light coming through doors when they are closed.
- Keep doors closed that are open to the outside. This can be done by putting a self closer on the door.
- Inspect incoming pallets, pallet jacks, ingredients bags, ingredients and other materials to ensure insects are not coming in this way.

For more information on pest control, please visit our website at agriculture.alberta.ca/foodsafety. From here, click on "Processors" and then scroll half way down the page to "Resources for Processors—[chapter 9](#) of the [Food Safety Guidebook](#)".

For a free hard copy of the Food Safety Guidebook, please contact Kimberly Comeau at 403-388-3189, dial 310-0000 toll free in Alberta or, email foodsafety@gov.ab.ca.

Did you know?

The common housefly carries diseases and pathogens, including *Listeria* and *Salmonella*.

Specified Risk Material (SRM) Requirements

Main reasons for SRM removal and disposal are:

- food safety and
- enhanced feed ban requirements

The current approved SRM control program must include:

- employee training,
- aging of all bovine animals,
- Over thirty months (OTM) carcass identification and marking,
- SRM removal and segregation from edible and inedible products.

SRM tissues includes the skull, brain (includes any brain tissue that has been externalized at the time of stunning), trigeminal ganglia, eyes, palatine tonsils, spinal cord and the dorsal root ganglia (DRG) of cattle aged 30 months or older and the distal ileum of cattle of all ages. Note: To ensure complete removal of the DRG's, the vertebral column must be removed using a one-inch margin.

Other requirements include that handling tools and equipment dedicated for SRM use must be colour-coded or use another visual system, and be used only for this purpose or cleaned and sanitized between uses. This includes but is not limited to: knives, SRM waste containers as well as labeling containers that are designated for SRM use.

Alberta Agriculture versus CFIA roles in provincially licensed facilities

Provincial Meat Inspectors are responsible for monitoring SRM handling and ensuring any potential food safety issues are addressed by the facility operator to ensure there is no cross-contamination of edible products and SRM waste is handled appropriately (as per the CFIA approved program).

CFIA is responsible for providing approvals to SRM control programs and following up on non-conformances to the enhanced feed ban.

For more information, please visit www.inspection.gc.ca and search Specified Risk Material—[Requirements for Slaughtering Cattle and Processing Beef](#)

Alberta Pork Continues to Work Traceability

The Alberta Swine Traceability System is a tool designed to support food safety and disease mitigation. To meet the goals of the traceability system the participation of everyone in the value chain, including producers, transporters and abattoirs, is required. The more participants reporting into the system, the stronger and more effective the system becomes.

Reporting and submitting Alberta Pork swine manifests has been mandatory for farm-to-slaughter movements since December 1, 2011. Full-movement requirements came into effect, both nationally and provincially, on July 1, 2014. If you are not submitting swine manifests for swine received, please contact the Alberta Pork office toll free at 1-877-247-7675 (PORK) to receive swine manifests at no charge.

It is the responsibility of the receiver to report and submit the swine manifest for movements received within Alberta. Movement reporting is as simple as completing the appropriate portion of the swine manifest and faxing the top white copy to 1-888-715-4563. (This number is located on every Alberta Pork manifest towards the bottom of the page.) Movements can also be submitted through email to traceability@albertapork.com.

As the delegated authority on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Alberta Pork's role is to educate and provide support to those in the industry to comply with the Swine Traceability Regulation under the *Animal Health Act*. Throughout 2014, Christina Carley, Traceability Coordinator with Alberta Pork, performed various education visits with assemblers, and federal and provincial processors across Alberta. If you have not received a visit from Christina, or if you have any questions regarding your role or about Alberta's Swine Traceability System, please contact Christina Carley by phone at 1-780-440-8461 or by email at christina.carley@albertapork.com.

Alberta Pork would like to acknowledge and extend their gratitude to those who are currently participating in the program.

Growing Forward 2 
A federal-provincial-territorial initiative



An Alberta piglet with an ear tag. Photo courtesy of Alberta Pork.

GROWING FORWARD 2 FUNDING STILL ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

PROGRAMS THAT APPLY TO YOU

- Agri-Processing Automation and Efficiency—Livestock
- Agri-Processing Product and Market Development—Livestock
- Business Management Skills Development
- Business Opportunity
- Livestock Welfare Processor
- Food Safety Systems Processor

For more information visit:
www.growingforward.alberta.ca/Programs/

SAIT Butchery and Charcuterie Management Certificate

Practical, hands-on learning to meet industry demand

The Butchery and Charcuterie Management program at SAIT Polytechnic is a one-year certificate that teaches knowledge in meat science, sanitation, processing and management with hands-on training through the student-run butcher shop.

Simulating an industry-style setting, students learn to prepare and sell value-added proteins to paying customers through the on-campus retail outlet—The Butchery. The Butchery, supported by the Michelle O'Reilly Charcuterie Lab, underwent extensive renovations including state-of-the-art curing chambers and smokers in 2014.

With real-world experience at the heart of the program, graduates acquire the skills necessary for entry into Alberta's rapidly growing meat and charcuterie trade. Students graduated April 2015 with the second intake occurring September 2015.



SAIT Butchery and Charcuterie Management student. Photo courtesy of SAIT Polytechnic.

Sanitation Reminders

Good sanitation involves cleaning and sanitizing and is essential to food safety and quality.

Sanitation removes soil and microorganisms (bacteria, yeasts, moulds, etc.) from the environment and prevents bacteria build up (e.g. biofilm).

Cleaning versus Sanitizing

Cleaning involves removing soil or product residue from surfaces. It consists of washing and rinsing usually using detergents and soaps.

The purpose of sanitizing is to eliminate or significantly reduce the number of pathogenic bacteria and food spoilage micro-organisms to acceptable levels.

Biofilm

A biofilm is a build-up of micro-organisms attached to a solid surface. They are formed by pathogenic and spoilage bacteria that can contaminate food products during production.

UPCOMING COURSES

SAIT Polytechnic Butchery and Charcuterie Management

September 2015 Calgary, Alberta

For more information, phone 403-284-8612 or email culinary@sait.ca



Olds College National Meat Training Centre Meat Processing Program

September 2015 Olds, Alberta

For more information visit: oldscollege.ca/programs or call Brad McLeod at 403-556-4792



NAIT

Food Safety Online Courses

September 9—October 2, 2015

For more information visit: nait.ca

