



MEAT PLANT HACCP NEWSLETTER

No.4 March 2003

Newsletter No.4 focuses on CCPs as well as guidance on microbiological testing of carcasses.

HACCP WORKSHOP

20 March in Milton Keynes
Please contact FSA London
for **urgent** details
☎ 020 7276 8353

*Note: If there is a demand,
support will be provided for
Urdu/Punjabi/Hindi speakers*

HACCP WORKSHOP

21 March in Chard
Please contact FSA London
for **urgent** details
☎ 020 7276 8353

WELSH WORKSHOP on HACCP principles

10 April in Machynlleth
Please contact FSA Wales for
details
☎ 029 2067 8906

SCOTTISH SEMINAR on HACCP principles

30 April in Perth
Please contact FSA Scotland
for details
☎ 01224 285191

NORTHERN IRELAND HACCP WORKSHOP

To register an interest
Please contact FSA N. Ireland
☎ 028 9041 7700

**Workshops will only be held
if there is a demand – please
act now.**



**The Meat (HACCP) Regulations come
into effect for small plants on 7 June 2003**

CRITICAL CONTROL POINTS (CCPs)

Use the table shown at **Section 4 page 11** of the **Meat Plant HACCP Manual** to help you decide which of your process steps are or are not CCPs.

CCPs are the steps in the process at which control can be applied and a food safety hazard can be prevented, eliminated or reduced to acceptable levels.

You and your staff can minimise the presence and spread of bacteria by controlling those steps in your process where bacterial contamination is most likely to occur, thereby reducing the likelihood of bacterial contamination of the meat.

Blank copies of the CCP determination table can be downloaded from **Section 7 of the Cd-Rom**.

Do not have too many CCPs and do not confuse food safety controls with quality controls.

For suggested CCPs for slaughterhouses, cutting plants, re-packaging centres, re-wrapping centres and cold stores, see **Section 3 page 13** of the Manual.

Your good hygiene procedures and working practices become critical when applied at a CCP. That's why **effective cleaning, staff training, staff hygiene** are such an important foundation for a HACCP-based system of food safety.

CARCASE TESTING FOR SMALL RED MEAT SLAUGHTERHOUSES

Microbiological testing of carcasses is an important way of checking that your HACCP-based procedures are effective (*HACCP principle 7-verification*) and that hygiene is under control in your slaughterhouse.

The law sets out the rules for testing but allows the frequency of testing in low throughput premises & 'establishments not working on a full-time basis' to be decided by the OVS.

The FSA has agreed the following guidance for OVSs in consultation with industry and other stakeholders (see Newsletter No 1.) although individual judgements will still be needed according to the circumstances.

GUIDANCE ON FREQUENCY OF TESTING

The FSA's guidance links the frequency of carcass testing to slaughterhouse throughput.

Slaughterhouses are placed in 3 categories:

(i) Full throughput with normally more than 35 hours OVS supervision a week.
Considered to be working full-time. Frequency of testing as for 'large' slaughterhouses.

(ii) Full throughput with normally 35 hours or less OVS supervision a week.
Considered to be working less than full-time. Plants fall into 3 sub-groups:

Group A: Throughput normally above 500 livestock units a week

Validation: Sample 5 carcasses on one day a week for at least two weeks per species slaughtered, except where annual numbers are normally very low. If results are satisfactory reduce to verification frequency (see below).

If significant changes occur, such as the slaughter of an extra species, the addition of a new slaughter line, or the introduction of a new dressing technique, there should be a new HACCP Plan or revised HACCP procedures. Validate by sampling 5 carcasses of each of the species concerned for two weeks or until the results are satisfactory.

Verification: Sample 5 carcasses on one day every *four weeks* (alternating species where relevant). If results are unsatisfactory review operating practices and resume weekly testing for the species concerned until the results are satisfactory.

Group B: Throughput normally between about 150 - 500 livestock units a week

As for Group A above, but sample carcasses for verification every *eight weeks*.

Group C: Throughput normally below about 150 livestock units a week

As for Group A above, but sample carcasses for verification every *twelve weeks*.

(iii) Low throughput slaughterhouses.

Testing to validate procedures for each species.

Validation: Sample 5 carcasses for each of the species slaughtered, except where annual numbers are very small. For analysis of results, the five results for each species should be treated as a group and averaged. If results are satisfactory, further samples of a species need only be taken if a significant change occurs (see below), or after 12 months have lapsed since the species was last tested.

If significant changes occur, such as the slaughter of an extra species (other than when annual numbers are expected to be very small); or dressing methods change significantly (e.g. from cradle to rail), there should be a new HACCP Plan or revised HACCP procedures. Validate these by sampling the relevant species as described above.

For further information, refer to the FSA's booklet: **Guidance on the implementation of microbiological testing procedures and interpretation of results**, that was sent out with the HACCP Manual.

EXCISION v SWABBING

Excision sampling recovers a greater proportion of organisms from carcass surfaces and can be easier to carry out on the line than swabbing. It may also be cheaper because fewer consumables are used. **Operators are strongly recommended to use the excision method**, especially when only a few samples are being taken a year.