**Conference for Food Protection**

**2014 Issue Form**

**Internal Number: 105**

**Issue: 2014 III-024**

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| **Council Recommendation:** | Accepted as  Submitted |  | Accepted as Amended |  | No Action |  |
| **Delegate Action:** | Accepted |  | Rejected |  |  |  |

*All information above the line is for conference use only.*

**Title:**

Create Committee for Raw and Undercooked Meat and Poultry Products

**Issue you would like the Conference to consider:**

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is recommending that a committee be formed to evaluate the effectiveness of consumer warning messaging for raw and undercooked meat and poultry products, develop recommendations for the FDA Food Code Annex, and suggest changes to the Food Code language. Although the Food Code recommends cooking meat and poultry products thoroughly, they may be served raw or undercooked with a consumer warning (section 3-603.11). FSIS and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that consumers do not eat raw or under cooked meat or poultry, however these products continue to be associated with food borne illness outbreaks.

**Public Health Significance:**

Pathogenic (illness-causing) bacteria such as Salmonella, Shiga-toxin producing Escherichia coli (STECs), Campylobacter jejuni, Listeria monocytogenes and Staphylococcus aureus are found in foods of animal origin.

E. coli O157:H7 is of particular concern in ground beef and is the most well known STECs. STECs produce a toxin in the intestine that severely damages the lining of the intestine causing the disease, hemorrhagic colitis, and may also cause Hemolytic Uremic Syndrome particularly in children.

E. coli O157:H7 bacteria survive in both refrigerator and freezer temperatures. Temperatures between 40°F and 140°F (4.4° and 60°C) are conducive for bacterial growth. In order to keep bacteria levels low, ground beef should be stored at 40°F (4.4°C). It is important to thoroughly cook ground beef to an internal temperature of 160°F (71.1°C) to kill bacteria. Illnesses caused by E. coli O157:H7 have been linked to the consumption of undercooked ground beef.

In January 2013, two Michigan retail establishments recalled a combined 1,050 pounds of ground beef products. A total of 22 persons in 6 states were infected with the outbreak strain of Salmonella Typhimurium with the most illnesses originating in Michigan (9) followed by Wisconsin (8). No deaths were reported, but 50% of ill persons were hospitalized according to a report from the CDC. Several illnesses occurred from consuming a raw ground beef dish, Kibbe or Kibbeh, at a restaurant that acquired the raw beef from the two Michigan retail establishments. December 2012 - January 2013, there was also an Escherichia coli O157:H7 outbreak associated with the seasonal consumption of Raw Ground Beef in a dish known as tiger meat in Wisconsin. CDC warns consumers to avoid eating raw ground beef in dishes such as "cannibal sandwiches" also known as "tiger meat"; a Midwest holiday tradition that continues to be associated with outbreaks. FSIS and CDC also do not recommend consumers eat other raw or undercooked beef products.

The 2013 Food Code specifies that raw or lightly cooked animal foods may be served or offered for sale in a ready-to-eat (RTE) form if the consumer is informed as specified under section 3-603.11. However, consumers may disregard these warnings or not understand the risk from consuming raw or under cooked meat and poultry products, leading to foodborne illness outbreaks.

References:

http://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/typhimurium-01-13/advice-consumers.html

http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6248a4.htm?s\_cid=mm6248a4\_w

**Recommended Solution: The Conference recommends...:**

that a CFP committee be formed and charged with the following:

1) Review and evaluate the literature on the effectiveness of consumer warning messages including, but not limited to, raw and under cooked meat and poultry products;

2) Develop recommendations for the FDA Food Code Annexes that include use of technologies such as high pressure processing or irradiation for the treatment of raw or undercooked meat or poultry products; and

3) Report back to the 2016 Biennial Meeting with recommendations for new FDA Food Code language related to preparation of raw meat and poultry products.

**Submitter Information:**

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