



April 13, 2004

Ms. Glenda M. Christy  
Chair, Conference for Food Protection  
1085 Denio Avenue  
Gilroy, CA 95020-9206

Dear Ms. Christy:

The 2004 biennial meeting of the **Conference for Food Protection** is a fitting occasion for FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition to commend the Conference for its significant achievements in support of State and local food safety programs.

The FDA in a Memorandum of Understanding recognizes the Conference for Food Protection as a voluntary national organization qualified to develop standards to promote food protection. Conference recommendations contribute to improvements in the model FDA Food Code and help jurisdictions justify, adopt and implement its provisions.

Conference mechanisms involving active participation by representatives of diverse stakeholder groups produce consensus standards of the highest quality. An excellent example is the Conference's **Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs**, and its announcement of the new on-line listing of accredited certifiers of industry food protection managers. Many years in their development, these Conference standards identify the essential components necessary for a credible certification program. Components cover a wide range of requirements such as detailed criteria for exam development and administration, and responsibilities of the certification organization to candidates and the public.

FDA applauds the Conference for this significant achievement, and encourages agencies at all levels of government to accept certificates issued by listed certifiers as meeting their jurisdictions' food safety knowledge and certification requirements. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) has independently evaluated these certification programs under an agreement with the Conference for Food Protection. Governments and industry widely recognize and respect ANSI as an accrediting organization. ANSI has found certifiers it lists as accredited ([www.ansi.org](http://www.ansi.org)) to conform to the Conference's **Standards for Accreditation of Food Protection Manager Certification Programs**.

CDC estimates 76 million Americans get sick, more than 300,000 enter the hospital, and 5,000 people die because of food-borne illnesses each year. The FDA Food

Code states the person in charge of a food establishment is accountable for developing, carrying out, and enforcing procedures aimed at preventing food-borne illness. Section 2-102.11 states that one means by which a person in charge may demonstrate required knowledge of food safety is through certification as a food protection manager by passing an examination that is part of an accredited program.

FDA encourages food regulatory authorities and others evaluating credentials for food protection managers to recognize the Conference for Food Protection/ANSI means of accrediting certification programs. This procedure provides a means for **universal acceptance** of individuals who successfully demonstrate knowledge of food safety. The procedure provides officials assurance that food safety certification is based on valid, reliable, and legally defensible criteria. In addition, universal acceptance eliminates the inconvenience and unnecessary expense of repeating training and testing when managers work across jurisdictional boundaries.

FDA, along with state, local, tribal and other federal agencies and the food industry, share the responsibility for ensuring that our food supply is safe. It is anticipated that this new Conference for Food Protection/ANSI program will lead to enhanced consumer protection, improve the overall level of food safety, and be an important component of a seamless national food safety system.

Sincerely yours,

Robert E. Brackett, Ph.D.  
Director  
Center for Food Safety  
and Applied Nutrition

