

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announces the availability of two manuals designed to assist state, local, and tribal regulatory jurisdictions and the retail and food service entities they regulate with reducing the occurrence of foodborne illness risk factors.

“Managing Food Safety: A Manual for the Voluntary Use of HACCP Principles for Operators of Food Service and Retail Establishments (Operator’s Manual)” provides operators of retail and food service establishments with a step-by-step scheme for designing and voluntarily implementing food safety management systems based on HACCP principles. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) is a system of preventive controls. For industry, the rationale for developing and implementing a food safety management system based on HACCP principles is to provide a system of controls to ensure that final products are not contaminated with agents that could cause foodborne illness or injury. By voluntarily implementing food safety management systems, active managerial control of foodborne illness risk factors can be achieved. Any operator of retail or food service is encouraged to voluntarily utilize the methods and procedures presented in the manual. The document can be found by accessing the following website: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/hret2toc.html>.

“Managing Food Safety: A Regulator’s Manual for Applying HACCP Principles to Risk-based Retail and Food Service Inspections and Evaluating Voluntary Food Safety Management Systems” provides state, local, and tribal regulatory authorities with a step-by-step scheme for conducting risk-based inspections based on HACCP principles to assist them with identifying and assessing control of foodborne illness risk factors. In addition, the manual details intervention strategies that can be developed with retail and food service operators to reduce the occurrence of foodborne illness risk factors. It also provides recommendations for evaluating voluntarily-implemented food safety management systems if invited to do so by industry. The document can be found by accessing the following website: <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/hret3toc.html>.

The utilization of voluntary food safety management systems by industry and the incorporation of risk-based methodology into regulatory inspection programs are important elements in reaching the goals established by the Healthy People 2010 health improvement strategy and FDA retail program goals.

In 2004, the Conference for Food Protection (CFP) endorsed both documents with a recommendation that both industry and regulatory entities consider implementing the principles of the documents into their respective food safety programs. The CFP is composed of regulators, industry, academia, professional organizations, and consumers whose purpose is to identify problems, formulate recommendations, and develop and implement practices that relate to food safety.

A Federal Register notice announcing the availability of these documents was published July 21, 2005 (Docket No. 2005D-0274).