

change outer clothing and boots every time they enter a restricted area." Even the egg truck drivers must be limited to egg-packing and egg storage rooms only. Proper visitor logs must be maintained.

The farm and buildings must be well maintained and maintenance reports kept current. Chemicals must be inventoried and stored in a designated chemical storage facility away from the barn and egg coolers.

As with all manufacturing practices, quality ingredients make for a quality product. The feed, water and air must be of the highest standards to ensure quality eggs and compliance with the 'Beyond ‘Clean’ program. Feed supplier certificates of compliance must be obtained from the feed supplier prior to the delivery of feed and the producer must keep a feed log. Water must be tested for bacteria and other pathogens twice during each laying cycle. In addition, in the winter, monthly ammonia tests must be performed and documented.

The CCPs
Within the program, three items have been identified as the CCPs; pest control, facility hygiene and egg storage. Rodents, flies and wild birds are identified as possessing the greatest threat to the introduction of S.e. or other pathogens into the flock. Procedures must be in place to minimize or eliminate these threats. Ongoing monitoring and record keeping are essential in the evaluation of the control of these vectors.

Every producer must have an effective sanitation program in place to prevent the contamination of the hens and eggs. This program includes on-going cleaning of the barn facilities plus the complete sanitation of the barn between flocks. Producers must follow the sanitation guidelines as suggested by the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency. In addition, regular enviro-swab tests of the barn must be performed and documented to maintain a HACCP certified facility.

Ungraded eggs are to be moved to a temperature controlled storage facility. The temperature of the refrigeration unit is

to be set at 7°C and to not exceed 13°C. An electronic data recorder is placed in the cool storage facility to maintain an accurate record of any temperature variations. Graded eggs, if applicable, are stored in a separate room under similar conditions.

The Future of Eggs
"The industry is looking to the future to ensure a safe product for consumers and a consistent, growing market for its products," explains Kuipers. "Once the producers have HACCP in place there will be an interest in continuing a HACCP program all the way to the retailers' display cases." The OEP aims to have all 160 producers currently enrolled in the program (albeit at various stages of implementation), eventually HACCP certified. This goal keeps Kuipers, and her colleague, busy meeting the demand. "Eventually we may see the entire supply chain HACCP certified including the grading stations, transporters and retailers," says Kuipers. "For now, eggs produced at farms certified under this program have the greatest assurance of safety possible under practical farm conditions." ■

Upcoming Annual Meetings and Conventions 2001			
Date	Organization	Location	Telephone
July 31	Ontario Apple Marketing Commission - Annual Meeting	Mississauga	905 858 1060
Aug. 27	Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board - Annual Meeting	Stratford	519 767 6537
Sept. 5 - 6	Ontario Agri-Business Association - Fertilizer Conference	Grand Bend	519 822 3004
Sept. 10	Ontario Agri-Business Association - Feed Conference	Guelph	519 822 3004

This information is provided strictly for our readers' convenience. Please note that organizations may restrict attendance to some or all of their agenda items. Please contact each organization for more information on programs, agenda items open to non-members, and location. While the Commission endeavours to ensure this information is correct, readers are responsible for confirming its accuracy with individual organizations before making any plans to attend. ■

O F P M C

Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission
New s l e t t e r

Summer 2001 - Issue #90

Ontario Egg Producers go ‘Beyond Clean’ with HACCP

The safety of eggs produced in Ontario is a top priority for the Ontario Egg Producers (OEP). The OEP has developed an on-farm Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) program to help its producers ensure a continual safe product for consumers. To date, 41 egg farms and two pullet flocks have achieved HACCP certification from the Guelph Food Technology Centre. This program has made OEP a leader in the industry for ensuring consistently safe, high quality products for consumers.

Launched in 1999, OEP's HACCP program ‘Beyond Clean’ is a logical extension of the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency's good

management practices program called ‘Start Clean/Stay Clean’. The premise of the ‘Beyond Clean’ program is to ensure Ontario's egg supply is free from contaminants as the market for Ontario eggs continues to grow.

What is HACCP?

Based on good science, HACCP identifies where hazards may occur in food production and puts in place actions to be taken to prevent them.

Through control and monitoring of critical control points (CCPs) in the process, the risk of introducing food borne hazards into the food chain is further reduced.

The Pillsbury Company pioneered the HACCP concept with the U.S. Army and NASA in the 1960s. The challenge was to perfect a "zero defect" program to guarantee safety of foods for astronauts while in space. HACCP emphasised control of the food process as far upstream in the processing system as possible.

HACCP has become synonymous with food safety. Recognized worldwide, it has become a food safety yardstick acceptable to both industry and government. HACCP

provides a systematic and proactive evaluation of foods by determining the risks from biological, chemical and physical hazards.

The OEP

OEP is the marketing organization for approximately 400 egg producers and 160 pullet growers in Ontario that accounts for 40% of total egg production in Canada, or 178 million dozen eggs annually. In

addition to its role in ensuring a continually safe product, the OEP's primary functions include, forecasting demand and allocating production levels, poultry and egg research and development, quality control, stimulating consumer demand, and production efficiency.

The ‘Beyond Clean’ Program

Pamela Kuipers is the HACCP Coordinator for OEP. It is her role to assist egg producers to achieve HACCP certification. Hired in 1999, Ms. Kuipers has been very

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Pam Kuipers, OEP's HACCP Co-ordinator

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New Member Joins Commission



Fred Lewis is the newest appointed member of the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission. Fred is no stranger to agriculture as he has served as a director with the Chicken Farmers of Ontario and a member of the Ontario Corn Producers’ Association. Fred owns and operates a successful agricultural business consisting of poultry and cash crops production.

As a recent appointee to the Commission, Fred is anxious to contribute to the well being of the agriculture and food industry. "I want to make sure all parties co-operate for the benefit of the whole industry," explains Lewis. "It is amazing what can be accomplished when everyone has an understanding of the system and strives to co-operate."

A graduate of the Ridgetown College of Agriculture Technology, Fred has served on several municipal and provincial boards and commissions. He has also served as Councillor, Deputy Reeve, and Reeve of London Township, and one year as Warden of Middlesex County.

Ontario Egg Producers go ‘Beyond Clean’ with HACCP *continued from page 1*

busy meeting the demand from producers for this HACCP program. "Producers have a desire to improve their flocks and the management of those flocks," says Kuipers. The program has had great success and demand. In fact, Kuipers could not keep up with the demand so a second coordinator, Lorraine Stevenson, was hired in November 2000. With both coordinators on the road, the aim is to have 50 producers certified in 2001.

Once a producer has indicated an interest in the program, Kuipers or her associate will visit the producer to fully explain the program. "Most egg producers already have very good management practices," explains Kuipers. "Usually it is just a matter of helping the producer to further develop the record keeping." OEP’s program not only endorses a clean, efficient operation but also includes clear records indicating the manufacturing processes.

The ‘Beyond Clean’ program consists of keeping the barn well maintained, sanitary and free of pests (rodents, flies and wild birds), as well as maintaining the temperature for egg storage at approximately 7°C and keeping clear, consistent records on all production-related activities. Initial audits and annual re-audits are completed by an independent third party, the Guelph Food Technology Centre.

Components of the ‘Beyond Clean’ Program
The bacterium, *Salmonella enteritidis* (S.e.) poses the greatest threat for egg producers. Many of the procedures in the ‘Beyond Clean’ program are designed to eliminate or further minimize the entry of S.e. into the hens and eggs. Each flock must be tested for S.e. after 15 and 45 weeks of age. Flock history certificates must accompany each pullet flock delivered to the layer barns. Flocks must be 100% S.e. negative.

Both the farm owner and personnel must be trained to ensure the product remains up to standards. The HACCP coordinator trains the farm owner and the owner is expected to stay current with HACCP requirements. The owner is thus responsible to ensure all staff are trained properly in their duties and record keeping. Employee training must also be recorded as part of the process of certifying and re-certifying annually.

People and equipment have the potential to carry pathogens, including S.e., into a barn. Thus there must be procedures in place to minimize the hazard. Producers must limit access to their barns and staff must practice biosecurity at all times. "Many producers have shower-in-procedures even though it is not required for certification," explains Kuipers. "At the very least, one must

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Commission Thanks George Leroux

George Leroux bid farewell to the Commission at the May 2001 meeting. Over the last six years, Commission members and staff have enjoyed and

benefited from his extensive knowledge base, and clarity during discussions. Thank you George. ■

OFPMC Update

The following is a summary of issues recently addressed by the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission.

Commission Grants Grape Board’s Request to Levy Interest Fees

The Ontario Grape Growers’ Marketing Board made a request to amend its regulations to provide it with the authority to impose prompt payment discounts, delayed payment penalties and interest on license fees and service charges owing by any person engaged in the producing, marketing or processing of regulated product. The Commission accepted the Grape Board’s request with the understanding that a mechanism would be established to deal with situations where disputes are outstanding.

Approval of Final Version of Chicken FPA

The Commission passed a motion in mid June to support the 2001 Federal-Provincial Agreement for chicken. The new FPA will only come into force when all 34 signatories from the 10 provinces sign the agreement. B.C. and Alberta were not signatories to the previous FPA. Subsequently, the Honourable Brian Coburn, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, signed the agreement along with the other signatories present at the Federal-Provincial meeting of agriculture ministers on June 28 in Whitehorse.

Meeting with the Apple Commission

The OFPMC met with the Apple Commission to discuss operations while the review is underway. The Apple Commission and the OFPMC agreed upon an operating plan in order to meet key objectives in the interim period. Included in the plan, is the continuation of its integrated pest management program already in its second year. As well, the Apple Commission will be assessing its priorities for the fall promotion program and subsequently proceeding with a targeted promotion plan. The OFPMC is encouraging the Apple Commission’s collection of grower/processor fees while the review is being performed.

Ginseng Designated as a Farm Product

Further to the recent expression of opinion vote showing that a majority of Ontario ginseng growers supported being represented by a province-wide association, it was necessary for the OFPMC to pass a motion designating ginseng as a farm product. Now that the designation has been formalized, the Minister can recommend to Cabinet that the Ontario Ginseng Growers’ Association be designated as the representative

association for all producers of ginseng in Ontario under Section 12 of the Farm Products Marketing Act, with the authority to impose an annual license fee.

Meeting with the Turkey Board

The Commission invited the Ontario Turkey Producers’ Marketing Board for a review meeting. The Turkey Board currently represents 170 producers in Ontario. The Board expressed its concerns with the increased energy costs both producers and processors are experiencing. This increased cost may affect the profitability of the industry.

Most of the Board’s marketing and promotion funds are spent in the foodservice area and at the retail level. After one particular promotion one retailer commented that sales of turkey product in his store increased by 66%.

Other strengths the Board indicated were the national export policy that has allowed the exports of turkeys by using re-grow credits for turkey production when exported. In addition the Board also has a very hands-on approach with respect to the type of research projects that it funds. In an attempt to increase its overall effectiveness, the Board is in the process of developing a strategic plan. ■