

# Behind the Legend

ISSUE NO. 10 Quarterly newsletter for Ontario's provincially licensed meat plant operators July 2013

The **meat inspection legend** is the stamp that goes on meat products when they have met all regulatory requirements and are deemed safe for Ontario consumers.



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## Working towards smarter program, regulations and guidelines

As the consultation on proposed changes to the Meat Regulation wraps up, I want to thank everyone who has attended a meeting or provided feedback. Your comments are appreciated and will be considered as we develop recommendations for regulatory changes. This process aims at removing regulations that are unnecessary, and providing a clearer, modern and more outcome-based regulation.

The four information sessions held across the province in early May were well attended. More than 100 meat plant operators, other business owners and individuals and 15 stakeholders organizations participated either in person or on the phone and via Webex. We have received close to 50 written comments and submissions. In addition, we held an "on-invitation" working meeting to dissect and discuss each proposed change to licensing in detail.

We heard many different perspectives and opinions about the proposed changes, and participants were generally very supportive of more outcome-based regulations. It was also clear that food safety is critically important to current licensed meat plants.

Our ongoing review of Meat Plant Guidelines (MPGs) is another important thing we do to clarify requirements for operators. In every edition of Behind the Legend, we provide a list of updates. Over the last three years we have reviewed 94 MPGs, and have provided updates to 70 of these in the newsletter. So far, of the 27 MPGs identified by stakeholders as "irritants", seven were eliminated. Other MPGs were significantly streamlined and rationalized. Their alignment with regulatory requirements was improved. We eliminated (or reorganized) a total of 47 requirements, and where necessary to improve food safety, added requirements.

Please stay tuned as we continue to review and adjust the meat inspection program to make sure it best protects public health without being unnecessarily onerous for businesses.

**Lee Orphan**  
**General Manager**

# Meat Plant Guidelines Updates

Meat Plant Guidelines are clear, plain-language explanations of the regulatory requirements under the Meat Regulation (Ontario Regulation 31/05). Updates are released on a quarterly basis. They are not changes to the Meat Regulation.

The Meat Inspection Technical Review Committee (which includes ministry staff and industry representatives) reviews the Meat Plant Guidelines to ensure they respond to industry needs and maintain food safety. Updates to the following meat plant guidelines are effective as of **July 2013**.

Updated [Meat Plant Guidelines](http://www.ontario.ca/meatinspection) are posted on OMAF and MRA's website: [www.ontario.ca/meatinspection](http://www.ontario.ca/meatinspection). To request printed copies or CD versions of the complete set contact [ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca](mailto:ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca) or 1-877-424-1300. ■

| No          | Title                                                                        | What has changed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| C9.04.01.02 | Control of external hazards, debris, refuse, including harbourage for vermin | Dust control removed from title.<br>Element 01 REMOVED.<br>Element 04 was revised for clarity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| C9.06.04.02 | Sanitation of facilities, equipment and utensils                             | REMOVED<br>Element 01 revised for clarity and moved to C9.06.06.01.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| C9.06.06.01 | Sanitation program and procedures                                            | Combination of C9.06.06.01, C9.06.06.02 and C9.06.04.02. Authoritative references 42 (a), 45(2) and 50(1)(2)(3)(4) added. Rationale was revised for clarity. Element 01 and 03 were revised for clarity. Element 02 was removed. Element 05 was added from C9.06.04.02. Elements 06, 07, 08 and 09 were revised for clarity and moved in from C9.06.06.02. |
| C9.06.06.02 | Cleaning and sanitizing procedures                                           | REMOVED<br>Rationale information about cleaning and sanitizing has been eliminated as there is a "sanitation kit" available to all plants. Element 01 revised for clarity and moved to C9.06.06.01. Elements 02, 03 and 04 were moved to C9.06.06.01 and element 05 was removed (appears in C9.04.10.01).                                                  |

| No                | Title                                           | What has changed                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| C9.06.11.01       | Temperature of meat processing rooms            | Information from P9.10.01.03 Process time controls incorporated into rationale. Element 02 revised for clarity and element 04 was removed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| C9.07.02.02       | Employee movement                               | Rationale revised for clarity. Colour coding example included from C9.07.02.03 (see below)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| C9.07.02.03       | Identification of employee movement             | REMOVED.<br>An example of the use of colour coding moved to rationale of C9.07.02.02.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| P9.10.01.03       | Process time control                            | REMOVED.<br>2 elements removed. Rationale information incorporated into C9.06.11.01                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| S9.04.08.03       | Ante mortem and post mortem inspection stations | Authoritative source 15(1)(b) added. Rationale revised for clarity. Element 01 revised for clarity. Element 03 revised for clarity. Element 04 removed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Table of Contents | Updated                                         | C9.04.01.02 Title changed from "Control of external hazards/debris and dust control/harbourage for vermin" to "Control of external hazards, debris and refuse, including harbourage for vermin".<br>C9.06.06.01 Title changed from "Sanitation program" to "Sanitation program and procedures"<br>C9.07.02.04 Title changed from "Product and air flow" to "Product and process flow".<br>C9.10.03.02 Title changed from "Contact surfaces" to "Storage of meat and non-food contact surfaces".<br>C9.06.11.01 Title changed from "Temperature of meat product rooms and areas" to "Temperature of meat processing rooms" |

# Dedicated Team helps to implement new guidelines for the safe production of fermented sausage and dried meats

A dedicated team is in place to help operators choose and implement the interventions for the safe production of fermented sausage and dried meats in their plants. The team, led by Clive Kingsbury and composed of further processing inspectors and food safety advisors, will provide information and education and be available to support their compliance efforts as needed.

The 60 meat plant operators who attended the June 11 and 12, 2013 information sessions in Stratford and Mississauga learned about the upcoming guidelines for the safe

production of fermented sausage and dried meat products. Presenters outlined acceptable interventions for operators and answered many questions to explain and clarify these options.

The new guidelines bring provincial regulatory requirements in line with Health Canada requirements.

For more information contact Agnes Pawelek at 519-826-4843, [agnes.pawelek@ontario.ca](mailto:agnes.pawelek@ontario.ca). ■

## Microbiological testing program of ready-to-eat meat products processed in provincially licensed meat plants

The ready-to-eat meat product testing program has been in place since January 2009. You will find updates on results twice a year in Behind the Legend.

Columns for indicator organisms and *Listeria monocytogenes* results indicate ongoing diligence with food safety best practices is needed to safeguard our food supply.

### Summary of results as of July 15, 2013

#### Number of adverse results by type

| Year    | Indicator organisms            |                                               |                                     |                    |                            | Pathogens / toxins            |                                  |                              |                                    |                   |
|---------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
|         | Number of sampled lots tested* | Number of sampled lots with adverse results** | Aerobic Colony Count (ACC) > 10,000 | Coli-forms > 1,000 | <i>E. coli</i> > HC limits | <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> | Verocytotoxigenic <i>E. coli</i> | <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> | <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> toxin | <i>Salmonella</i> |
| 2009    | 565                            | 64                                            | 52                                  | 1                  | 0                          | 11                            | 0                                | 0                            | 0                                  | 1                 |
| 2010    | 686                            | 47                                            | 36                                  | 8                  | 0                          | 6                             | 0                                | 0                            | 0                                  | 0                 |
| 2011    | 820                            | 57                                            | 48                                  | 2                  | 0                          | 9                             | 0                                | 0                            | 0                                  | 1                 |
| 2012    | 782                            | 50                                            | 36                                  | 1                  | 0                          | 11                            | 2                                | 2                            | 0                                  | 2                 |
| 2013*** | 411                            | 27                                            | 21                                  | 0                  | 0                          | 7                             | 0                                | 0                            | 0                                  | 0                 |

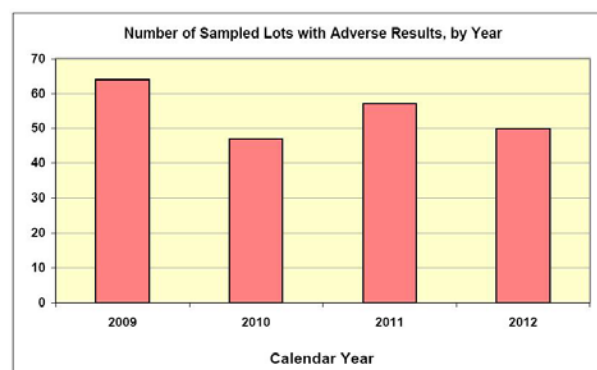
\*Five sub-samples collected and tested per sampled lot.

\*\*When levels of indicator organisms and/or pathogens are unsatisfactory (i.e. when level found in the sample exceed Health Canada limits).

\*\*\*Based on 6 months of sampling.

#### Notes:

- There could be more than one type of adverse result per lot.
- Samples "In-progress" at the lab are not counted in this table.
- 2013 — Appropriate corrective actions were taken and these findings did not result in recalls as no implicated products left meat plants.



# New Thunder Bay Meat Inspection Area to enhance services in north-western Ontario

In December 2012, the Meat Inspection Program expanded meat inspection support in the North by creating a new area in north-western Ontario and hiring a new area manager, Ken Ranta, to manage it.

Northern Ontario was previously served by a single program area, the Verner area, managed by Doug McLean. The creation of the Thunder Bay area splits northern Ontario in two and Doug continues to cover the north-eastern area. The Thunder Bay area stretches from the Ontario-Manitoba border to the east to include Hearst. Sault Ste. Marie remains within the Verner area.

The creation of the new area increases the managerial services provided to operators in north-western Ontario and will help better serve clients through enhanced and more consistent program delivery. ■



## Meat Tweets!

The ministry has launched a new Twitter account focused on food safety and traceability in Ontario. Tweets relate to food safety news, product updates, regulations and control measures as well as learning and training opportunities. Join the food safety and traceability dialogue,

**follow @ONfoodsafety today!**

## Meat Inspection Program Management Team

**GENERAL MANAGER:** Lee Orphan  
**REGIONAL MANAGERS**  
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 Joe Koza, East 519-826-3250  
**OPERATIONS MANAGER**  
 Joe Iacobellis 519-826-4364

**AREA MANAGERS**  
 Brighton — Robin Drew 613-475-5446  
 GTA — Ivona Jarosz 416-235-6690  
 Guelph — Alan Yee 519-826-4368  
 Kemptville — Vickie Sauvé 613-679-2825  
 Midhurst — Travis McMunn 705-725-7292  
 Peel — Eloise Jones 416-235-4086  
 Ridgetown — Jeff Richards 519-674-1534

For any inquiries regarding meat inspection, please contact your area manager. All area managers can be paged at: 1-800-263-1420. Please ask for your area manager by name.

Scarborough — Sanjay Sharma 416-235-4591  
 Stratford — Mark Mitchell 519-271-8278  
 Thunder Bay — Ken Ranta 807-620-2957  
 Verner — Doug McLean 705-594-2314  
 Vineland — Kim Landers 905-562-1710  
 Woodstock — Ed Bailey 519-537-5646  
 York — Pierre Adrien 416-235-6585

There are currently 133 provincially licensed abattoirs and 399 provincially licensed freestanding meat plants in Ontario.

**For more information:**  
**Telephone: 1-877-424-1300**  
**Email: [ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca](mailto:ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca)**  
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