



Behind the Legend

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.

From our General Manager's Desk: Food Safety Culture in Provincial Meat Plants *Partnership story*

As the owner and operator of Mt. Brydges Abattoir, one of Ontario's 500 provincially-licensed meat plants, David Trbizan was asked in an interview about the relationship between provincial meat plants and meat inspection staff. He commented that "meat inspectors...are a valuable resource because they provide oversight to ensure that the meat is safe and...



OMAFRA's Meat Hygiene Officer Adrien Lessard with David Trbizan, owner and operator of Mt. Brydges Abattoir.

are trained to see things that I don't always see". His inspector at the time, Meat Hygiene Officer Adrien Lessard, expressed that his "job is about working with the meat plant operators and educating them so that they can apply the regulations and standards in their real-life, day-to-day operations."

Both of these comments suggest a strong partnership between two parties working towards a common goal. A foundation of food safety and animal welfare *culture* at this plant.

Frank Yiannas, an internationally renowned food safety expert and author of *Food Safety Culture: Creating a Behavior-Based Food Safety Management System* (2016), discusses the daily operational *behaviour* of people.

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It is the 'behaviour' within plants that can affect food safety variables like hand washing, wearing clean clothes, hairnets, keeping raw product separate from ready to eat product, etc. Mr. Yiannas presented to meat inspection staff at a workshop this past spring and left staff with a message that if you are trying to improve food safety and animal welfare performance in provincially licensed plants, what you are really attempting to do is change how *people* approach and act when they find a problem or issue that impacts food safety and animal welfare expectations.

Provincial meat inspectors are not simply around to enforce regulatory requirements and tell operators what they are doing wrong. They, too, contribute to your plant's food safety culture through their considerable knowledge and awareness of many of the best practices being employed across provincial plants to ensure safe food and proper animal welfare. In essence, they contribute to your plant's food safety culture.

In future *Behind the Legend* issues, I would like to share more stories of partnership as chronicled at Mt. Brydges Abattoir so we can all learn from each other and keep building a food safety and animal welfare culture in our provincial meat plants. If you have a story to share, please do so by writing to: meat.inspection.communications@ontario.ca.

Jason McLean
General Manager (A)
Meat Inspection Program

More information about Frank Yiannas and developing a food safety culture in your plant can be found at: foodsafetyculture.com



David Trbizan, owner and operator of Mt. Brydges Abattoir.

From our Enforcement Desk: Recent Convictions

1. On July 22, 2016, Geppinos Grocery Market Ltd., (located at 5504 Lewis Avenue, Niagara Falls, Ontario L2G 3R7) pleaded guilty in the Niagara Region Provincial Offences Court in St. Catharines, to one count of carrying on licensed activities without being licensed as required under the *Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001*.

On July 22, 2016, Justice Stephen Lancaster ordered Geppinos Grocery Market Ltd., to pay a \$3,000 fine and a \$750 Victim Fine Surcharge.

2. On August 23, 2016, Kevin Pratten was convicted in the City of London Provincial Offences Court on one count of moving a fallen animal before it was killed, in violation of Ontario Regulation 105/09 (Disposal of Deadstock) under the *Food Safety and Quality Act, 2001*.

Justice Sonja Aleong noted that Mr. Pratten had received two previous warnings regarding this activity and ordered him to pay a \$1,600 fine and a \$400.00 Victim Fine Surcharge.

To view the full details of these recent convictions, please visit:
omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/foodsafety/compliance/index.htm

From our Food Safety Desk: Tips for effective pest control

The external environment surrounding your meat plant may be a source of food safety risks. Meat plants must be designed, constructed and equipped so that any external contamination risks (for example from birds, insects or environmental contaminants) are minimized or eliminated.

Sometimes conditions on the outside of your meat plant may provide the perfect housing and hiding spots for pests, such as mice and other rodents. Piles of debris, cinder blocks, uncontrolled weeds, wood piles and refuse near buildings create warm, dry, secure housing areas for pests.

To identify potential sources of shelter or entry for pests, take walks regularly around the exterior of your building. Look for:

- Signs of loose caulking around gas or water lines.
- Worn door sweeps.
- Damaged screens.
- Holes or gaps in foundations, roofs, and walls.
- Proper sealing and screening of air intakes.
- Closed external doors and windows.

Correct any items that you identify right away to avoid pests entering your plant.

Specific tips for effective pest control:

- Tidy the clutter – remove all debris that has accumulated outside the plant. Pay close attention to the area directly adjacent to your plant walls.
- Storage – if it is necessary to store items outside, keep items a distance away from your plant.
- Remove all sources of food that will attract pests.
- Rodent traps – ensure outside traps are set and properly functioning.
- Clear the vegetation - long grass and weeds can provide warm spots for rodents to hide or reside.
- Contact your local pest control professional to have them assess your pest control system.

Effective pest control can help protect your business from potentially costly and troublesome unwanted visitors.

Did You Know?

78 per cent of provincial red meat plants have already registered their premises through the Ontario Provincial Premises Registry (PPR).

If you are part of the 22 per cent that hasn't registered, it is quick, easy and free. Go online to: www.ontarioppr.ca or call Angus GeoSolutions Inc. at 1-855-697-7743 to speak to a representative today.

From our Food Safety Desk:

Ready to Eat (RTE) Meat testing results summary

As part of our surveillance and monitoring program, OMAFRA tests samples of RTE meat produced at provincially licensed plants. Occasionally these tests will come back with an adverse result. When the adverse result is a pathogen, in addition to a review of practices/protocols/procedures, the meat inspector will ensure that there is no risk to the public and assist the plant operator to complete a root cause analysis to aid in the identification of the potential source of contamination (e.g., environmental testing).

				Number of Adverse Results, by Type							
				Indicator Organisms			Pathogens/toxins				
Year	Number of Sampled Lots Tested ⁽¹⁾	Number of Sampled Lots with Adverse Results ⁽²⁾	Percentage of Lots with Adverse Results	Aerobic Colony Count (ACC) >10,000	Coliforms >1,000	<i>E. coli</i> >Health Canada limits ⁽⁴⁾	<i>Listeria mono-cytogenes</i>	Verocytotoxigenic <i>E. coli</i>	<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> > Health Canada limits ⁽⁵⁾	<i>S. aureus</i> toxin	<i>Salmonella</i>
2009	565	64	11.3%	52	1	0	11	0	0	0	1
2010	686	47	6.9%	36	8	0	6	0	0	0	0
2011	820	57	7.0%	48	2	0	9	0	0	0	1
2012	782	50	6.4%	36	1	0	11	2	2	1	2
2013	728	50	6.9%	39	4	0	13	0	2	0	0
2014	786	49	6.2%	32	1	0	17	0	0	0	1
2015 ⁽³⁾	702	42	6.0%	34	0	0	8	0	0	0	0
2016	354	23	6.5%	19	0	0	4	0	0	0	0

(1) Five sub-samples collected and tested per sampled lot.

(2) When levels of indicator organisms and/or pathogens are unsatisfactory (i.e. when levels found in the sample exceed Health Canada Limits). There could be more than one type of adverse result per lot.

(3) Data is from January 1, 2016 to July 12, 2016

(4) Health Canada limits for Generic *E.coli* are any of the following:

Heat treated Fermented Sausage >10³/g in 1 subsample or <10¹/g in more than 1 subsample

Raw Fermented Sausage >10³/g in 1 subsample or <10²/g in more than 1 subsample

Non-Fermented products >10³/g in 1 subsample or <10²/g in more than 2 subsamples

(5) Health Canada limits for *S. aureus* are any of the following:

FCC, FCNC & Dried: if any subsample has >10⁴/g or >10²/g in more than 2 subsamples

Heat Treated Fermented Meats: if any subsample has >10⁴/g or >50/g in more than 1 subsample. Raw Fermented: >10⁴/g or >250/g in more than 1 subsample.

FCC – Fully Cooked Comminuted

FCNC – Fully Cooked Non-Comminuted

From our Food Safety Desk: Keeping process control records protects your business

Process controls are critical processing steps that prevent, eliminate and control hazards in meat products. Recipes for meat products lay out the critical limits for different processing steps. Some examples of critical limits include:

- Minimum internal temperature and time held at that temperature for cooking.
- Cooling schedules for heat-treated products.
- Required pH that a fermented product must reach, and the time in which that pH must be reached.
- Required water activity of a fermented or dried product.
- Amount of restricted ingredients such as nitrite/nitrate or phosphate.

Records are proof that the critical limits have been met for key processes in your plant.

Maintaining records for process controls also helps you demonstrate the following:

- You have proof that products meet critical limits.
- You have a record of the actions you took to ensure the safety of a product when critical limits were not met (e.g., re-working a product with excessive nitrite, re-cooking a product that did not reach the required time/temperature).
- You are meeting regulatory requirements for your products.
- You can identify process control issues or trends before your products cause harm to someone or negatively impact your business's reputation.

It is important that you keep complete and accurate process control records for at least one year for all of your meat products. Process control records **show that you are doing what you say you will do to keep your products safe.**

Given their importance to food safety, process controls will be an area of added focus for our regulatory compliance activities in the coming year. For more information on process control records and regulatory requirements, please contact your Further Processing Inspector.

For Your Information: Revised Meat Plant Guidelines

The Meat Inspection Program has recently revised Meat Plant Guideline (MPG) P9.10.01.08, which describes requirements for the cooling rate of heat-treated meat products. The previous version of the MPG gave three approved options for cooling requirements: slow, rapid, and interrupted. The MPG revision includes three more cooling schedules for specific types of products (listed in Appendix 5).

This gives you more options for meeting cooling requirements for your heat-treated products. The same requirements for process control monitoring, deviation procedures, and recordkeeping apply to both the new cooling schedules and the existing cooling schedules.

We have also provided additional guidance for operators who choose to use slow cooling for their meat products. As slow cooling can only be used for meat products within certain levels of salt, water activity (a_w), and nitrite, this MPG now includes guidance on how operators can demonstrate that their products have these specific characteristics. As well, there is now a corresponding audit sub-element that requires operators to demonstrate that their products are eligible for slow cooling.

Should you have questions regarding the cooling requirements or would like a copy of the revised MPG, please speak with your inspector.

From our Training Desk:
Upcoming Training Sessions

Event	Date and Time	Location	Contact
Biofilm Detection and Treatment Workshop	October 26, 2016	Guelph	http://www.oimp.ca/programs-services/oimp-workshops-webinars/
Food Handler Training Workshop	Nov. 8 - 9, 2016, 8:30-4:30 (2-day workshop)	Guelph	http://www.oimp.ca/programs-services/food-handler-training/
Government Funding for Meat Processors	November 23, 2016	Webinar	http://www.oimp.ca/programs-services/oimp-workshops-webinars/
Best Practices for Finished Goods Labelling	December 14, 2016	Webinar	http://www.oimp.ca/programs-services/oimp-workshops-webinars/

There are currently 372 FSMP and 127 Abattoirs

Meat Inspection Program Management Team

GENERAL MANAGER:

Jason McLean 519-826-4367

For any inquiries regarding meat inspection, please contact your area manager. All area managers can be paged at: 1-866-395-8957

REGIONAL MANAGERS

Kim Landers, East 519-826-3250

Nick Van Lankveld, West 519-826-4281

Pierre Adrien (Central/North)
(Acting) 519-826-4368

Ask for your area manager by name.

OPERATIONS MANAGER

Joe Iacobellis 519-826-4364

AREA MANAGERS

Brighton — Robin Drew 705-324-7353

GTA — Ivona Jarosz 416-235-6690

Guelph — Ed Bailey 519-537-5646

Kemptville — Vickie Sauvé 613-679-2825

Midhurst — Eloise Jones 705-725-7292

Peel — Alan Yee 416-235-4591

Ridgetown — Jeff Richards 519-674-1534

Stratford — Mark Mitchell 519-271-8278

Verner — Vicky French 807-632-3564

Vineland — Goce Manevski 905-562-1710

Woodstock — Ed Bailey 519-537-5646

York — Hemant Karalepatil
(Acting) 416-235-6585

For more information:

Telephone: 1-877-424-1300

Email: ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca

Web: ontario.ca/meatinspection

Twitter: @ONfoodsafety

Regulation: www.ontario.ca/laws