

WHAT'S NEW AT Q

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An ISO/IEC 17025 Accredited Laboratory

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



As you can see from the text above my head here, Q Laboratories, Inc. has recently attained ISO/IEC 17025 Accreditation in multiple microbiological and analytical chemistry methods. I would like to recognize the entire staff here at Q Laboratories, because this achievement, like everything else we do here, is a team effort. The process of gaining ISO

accreditation was led by our Quality Assurance Unit, under the leadership of our Director of Quality, James Agin. However, credit also belongs to all of our lab managers, all of the analysts working in the labs and our excellent support staff. As a privately-owned, independent laboratory, we are proud to be able to say that our quality system and laboratory proficiency measures up to any lab in the world. ISO 17025 is the gold standard by which laboratories are judged and while we are not surprised we reached this level of excellence, we are certainly proud to have done so.

David G. Goins

David G. Goins, President

COST ESTIMATE

A recently released report estimates the total cost of foodborne illness in the United States as \$152 billion per year. The report entitled, "Health-Related Costs from Foodborne Illness in the United States," was issued by the Produce Safety Project (PSP), an initiative of the Pew Charitable Trusts at Georgetown University. The PSP utilized data released in 1999 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimating 76 million cases of food-related illness (resulting in 5,000 deaths and 325,000 hospitalizations) occur each year in the US. The author of the study claims, "the primary objective of this study is to provide policymakers with measures of the economic burden of foodborne illnesses, both at the aggregate level and at the pathogen-specific level. The derivation of a measure for the aggregate health costs of foodborne illness is useful as a means of evaluating the importance of this problem relative to other pressing health problems."

ON THE MENU

The recently passed Health Reform bill that garnered so much attention in the media and around the country contains a measure requiring the FDA to create a new national standard for menu labeling, which would supersede the various state and local laws which have been enacted in recent years. The Federal statute would require restaurants that operate at least 20 units to include nutritional information on their menus and menu boards. "The nutrition information is right on the menu or menu board next to the name of the menu item, rather than in a pamphlet or in tiny print on a poster, so that consumers can see it when they are making ordering decisions," said Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin, chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, who wrote the provision.

COMPLIANCE

The USDA-FSIS recently released the third edition of the Compliance Guideline for Controlling Salmonella and Campylobacter in Poultry. The document reads, "This Compliance Guideline represents current FSIS thinking on this topic and should be considered usable as of this issuance. This guideline for poultry articulates how industry can meet FSIS expectations regarding control of food safety hazards. The guidelines summarize known control points for Salmonella and Campylobacter in the pre- and post-harvest production process, and include summaries of scientific studies that can be used to support specific control parameters. This document includes recommendations rather than regulatory requirements."

The USDA has also released new performance standards to reduce Salmonella and Campylobacter in young chickens (broilers) and turkeys. This action was the result of an initiative proposed by the President's Food Safety Working Group. According to a USDA Press Release, "the standards announced today are the first-ever standards for Campylobacter, and mark the first revision to the Salmonella standards for chicken since 1996 and for turkeys since the first standards were set in 2005. The performance standards set a level in percentage of samples testing positive for a given pathogen an establishment must achieve and play a key role in reducing the prevalence of foodborne pathogens and preventing harm to consumers. The President's Food Safety Working Group has set a goal of having 90 percent of all poultry establishments meeting the revised Salmonella standard by the end of 2010...By revising current performance standards and setting new ones, FSIS is encouraging establishments to make continued improvement in the occurrence and level of pathogens in the products they produce. FSIS developed the stricter performance standards using recently completed studies that measure the baseline prevalence of Salmonella and Campylobacter in young chicken (broiler) and turkey carcasses nationwide."

CAUGHT IN THE WEB

Some new features of the Q Laboratories, Inc. website include multiple pages devoted to the ongoing construction of our 9000 sq.ft addition to our facility. The site includes pictures of various and continuing stages of this project. Construction is currently on schedule and slated to be completed in late summer, early fall of 2010.

Also being added to the website is a link to current job openings at Q Laboratories, Inc. **Please visit www.qlaboratories.com.**

TRADE SHOWS

Q Laboratories, Inc. will have representatives at the following trade show in the upcoming months:

- ▶ **National Restaurant Association, Restaurant-Hotel-Motel Show.** May 22-25, Chicago; **Booth # 5055**
- ▶ **Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) Annual Meeting and Food Expo.** July 18-20, Chicago; **Booth # 6158**
- ▶ **International Association for Food Protection (IAFP) Annual Meeting.** August 1-3, Anaheim, CA; **Booth # 126**