



International HACCP Alliance
120 Rosenthal Center
2471 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-2471
Telephone: 979-862-3643
FAX: 979-862-3075
<http://haccpalliance.org>

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Alliance News Lines

Consumer Safety Officer Program Underway, FSIS Administrator Visits

Thirty-eight U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA/FSIS) employees from across the country began the four-week Consumer Safety Officer (CSO) Educational Program on January 6 in College Station, Texas. This session consists of USDA/FSIS veterinary medical officers and compliance officers who are learning about the CSO work methodology.

On January 15, Dr. Garry McKee, USDA/FSIS administrator, visited the CSO Educational Program and spoke to the program participants about his vision of the agency's workforce and future. Along with McKee, Philip Derfler, USDA/FSIS deputy administrator, Bud Paulson, director of the FSIS Center for Learning, Bobby Palesano, CSO educational program contract supervisor and special assistant to the director of the FSIS Technical Service Center, and other agency representatives visited with the program participants during lunch.

This is the fourth CSO course taught through competitive grants received by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and the International HACCP Alliance.



Dr. Garry McKee, pictured far left, visits with several CSO program participants during lunch.

Harris participates in *E. coli* O157:H7 Summit

On January 7-8 in San Antonio, Texas, Kerri Harris, executive director of the International HACCP Alliance, was an invited participant in the *E. coli* Summit, which was managed by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association and funded through the Cattlemen's Beef Board with funds from the national beef checkoff program. During this intensive, two-day working summit, Harris captured information in the beef slaughter breakout group. The information gained through the breakout sessions was used to help develop the beef industry action plan. Action steps were identified for each industry segment: cattle production, slaughter, fabrication, processing, retail and foodservice. The Summit focused on identifying good manufacturing practices, interventions and research needs to reduce the incidents of *E. coli* O157:H7.

Harris talks to local 4-H members on food safety

On January 16, Kerri Harris spoke to six members of the Brazos County 4-H Club in College Station, Texas, about food safety at home and the USDA/FSIS Fight BAC program. Harris talked about the common myths of food safety, foodborne illnesses, the importance of using a thermometer to check product temperatures, and the four steps to keep food safe — clean, separate, chill and cook.