

examination of the current science and the models developed from it are among the tools available to FDA and FSIS to evaluate the effectiveness of current and future policies, programs, guidance, and regulatory practices to minimize the public health impact of this pathogen. Quantitative risk assessment of microbial pathogens is a structured process of collecting and evaluating data and information to assess the risks to human health from consumption of pathogenic microorganisms. The risk assessment evaluates the available data on food consumption, contamination by *L. monocytogenes* of various foods within 23 ready-to-eat food product categories, growth of the pathogen in such foods, and the infectious dose. The risk assessment follows the framework recommended both by the National Academy of Sciences and the Codex Alimentarius Commission. This structured framework involves the following steps:

(1) *Hazard Identification*. The collection and critical review of data and information on health effects associated with consumption of *L. monocytogenes*.

(2) *Exposure Assessment*. The determination of exposure to *L. monocytogenes* from consumption of various foods using prevalence and food consumption data.

(3) *Hazard Characterization/ Dose-response*. The description of the relationship between *L. monocytogenes* exposure level and frequency of severe illness or mortality using epidemiological investigations and data from animal studies.

(4) *Risk Characterization*. The integration of the exposure and dose-response data to estimate both the risk to the public health and the uncertainty associated with this estimate.

The risk assessment provides estimates of the number of cases of listeriosis associated with consumption of 23 ready-to-eat food categories on both a per serving and per annum basis and provides, though the assignment of predicted relative risk rankings, a means of comparing the relative risks among the different food categories and different population groups. The results of the risk assessment reinforce past epidemiological conclusions that foodborne listeriosis is a moderately rare but severe disease and that certain foods are more likely to be vehicles for *L. monocytogenes* and associated with outbreaks and sporadic illnesses.

Consumer exposure to *L. monocytogenes* at the time of consumption is affected by these five factors: (1) Amounts and frequency of consumption of a ready-to-eat food, (2)

frequency and levels of *L. monocytogenes* in a ready-to-eat food, (3) potential of the food to support growth of *L. monocytogenes* during refrigeration, (4) refrigerated storage temperature; and (5) duration of refrigerated storage before consumption. In interpreting the results of the risk assessment, the food categories were divided into five overall risk designations based on different approaches needed to control foodborne listeriosis.

III. Electronic Access

The risk assessment document is available electronically at www.cfsan.fda.gov, www.fsis.usda.gov, www.foodsafety.gov, and www.foodriskclearinghouse.umd.edu.

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Jeffrey Shuren,

Assistant Commissioner for Policy.

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DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Customs and Border Protection

U.S. Customs and Border Protection Trade Symposium 2003

AGENCY: U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Homeland Security.

ACTION: Notice of trade symposium.

SUMMARY: This document announces that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will convene a major trade symposium that will feature joint discussions by Department of Homeland Security and CBP personnel, members of the trade community, and other public and private sector representatives on the agency's role in the new Department, international trade security initiatives and the unification of functions at the border. Commissioner Robert C. Bonner will be the keynote speaker. Members of the international trade and transportation communities and other interested parties are encouraged to attend, and those attending are requested to register early.

DATES: Check-in and a reception will be held on Wednesday, November 19, 2003, from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. The symposium will be held on Thursday, November 20, 2003, from 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. and on Friday, November 21, 2003, from 8 a.m. until 12 p.m. All registrations must be made on-line and confirmed with payment on a space-available basis by November 14th.

ADDRESSES: The Trade Symposium of 2003 will be held in Washington, DC, at

the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, at 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW. Check-in and a reception will be held in the Pavilion Room on Wednesday, November 19th. The symposium will be held in the Amphitheater on Thursday, November 20th, and in the Atrium Ballroom on Friday, November 21st.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: ACS Client Representatives; CBP Account Managers; Regulatory Audit Trade Liaisons; or the Office of Trade Relations at (202) 927-1440 or at traderelations@dhs.gov. To obtain the latest information on the program or to register on-line, visit the CBP Web site at <http://www.cbp.gov>. Requests for special needs should be sent to the Office of Trade Relations at traderelations@dhs.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will be convening a major trade symposium (U.S. Customs and Border Protection Trade Symposium 2003) on Thursday, November 20, 2003, from 8:30 a.m. until 6 p.m. and on Friday, November 21, 2003, from 8 a.m. until 12 p.m. at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC. The symposium will feature joint discussions by Department of Homeland Security and CBP personnel, members of the trade community, and other public and private sector representatives on the agency's role in the new Department, international trade security initiatives and the unification of functions at the border. Commissioner Robert C. Bonner will be the keynote speaker. Members of the international trade and transportation communities and other interested parties are encouraged to attend.

The cost is \$150 per individual and includes all symposium activities. Interested parties are requested to register early, as space is limited. All registrations must be made on-line at the CBP Web site (<http://www.cbp.gov>). Registrations will be accepted on a space-available basis and must be confirmed with payment by November 14, 2003. The Renaissance Washington DC Hotel, 999 9th Street, NW., has reserved a block of rooms for Wednesday, November 19th and Thursday, November 20th at a rate of US\$189 per night. Reservations must be confirmed with the hotel by October 31st. Call 202-898-9000 or 1-800-228-9290 and reference the "CBP Trade Symposium."