CREATING AN INTEGRATED PORK SAFETY AND QUALITY SYSTEM IN GREECE

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Summary: The study for establishing an integrated safety and quality certified system for pork, in Greece, is reported. To this end, the Hellenic Organisation for Certification and Supervision of Agricultural Products (AGROCERT) created standards for feed production, pig farming, pig slaughtering, meat cutting and pork retail selling points. Certification of the various stakeholders of the pork industry, according to the above standards, by AGROCERT, is a prerequisite for entering to the system. The system is to be operated by an independent agency (DELFAX), to which production – processing – distributing units are participating, regardless of their specific activity, in the chain from production to the retail selling points. The agency is responsible for maintaining the basic characteristics for the credibility and transparency of the system, in order that certified pork will be distinguished in the market by means of a specific trade mark, in combination with the trade mark of AGROCERT.

Keywords: certification, trade marks, “stable to table”; trace ability, quality control

Introduction: One of the current attitudes of the consumer, in developing markets, is his/hers mistrust to food producers – processors – distributors, as well as to regulatory and food inspection authorities. The reaction of the stakeholders is to establish integrated, transparent and credible food safety and quality certified systems. In the EU, this is in line with the White Paper on Food safety (2000) and the Regulation 178/2002, which are generally supporting, among other things, the concept of integrated approach to food safety.

Within the above framework the stakeholders of the pork industry in Greece commissioned a study for establishing a relevant system for pork in Greece, which is reported bellow.

THE PREREQUISITES

In order to claim a certain level of safety and quality, as well as in fulfillment of “other legitimate factors”, to which the consumer is sensitive, related to sustainability and animal and environmental protection, standards for the different links in the chain of pork production – processing – distribution were established, under the auspices of AGROCERT. These standards are specifications appearing under the general title of “Management System for Pig Meat Quality Assurance”. They are the following:

- AGRO 3-1. Part 1: Requirements for the production of pig feedstuffs
- AGRO 3-2. Part 2: Farming requirements for pig fattening
- AGRO 3-3. Part 3: Requirements for pigs slaughter
- AGRO3-4. Part 4: Requirements for cutting, deboning, processing and packing pig meat
- AGRO 3-5. Part 5: Requirements for the retailers of pig meat.

At Annexes, in AGRO 3-3, the specifications for transportation of live animals and carcasses are, also, appearing.

THE SYSTEM

Certified implementation of the standards is a prerequisite for entering to the system. Notwithstanding the significance of the above standards, for achieving an assured safety and quality system, linking these standards together in an integrated way is an apparent necessity. Such a linking, serves the
contemporary concept for assuring food hygiene and quality, which is suggesting an holistic approach “from stable to table”.

To support the aforementioned requirements an independent agency, under the name DELFAX*, was created. It will assume the responsibility for preserving the basic characteristics for the credibility and transparency of the whole system, which are:

*DELFAX (Δέλφας) in the Homeric dialect means piglet

**Figure 1. Summary of the integrated safety and quality DELFAX system for pork**
ORAL PRESENTATIONS

- Identification and feedback traceability of a meat cut, ideally, at the level of final selling point
- Functioning of an electronic data base with unalterable and accessible to the consumer data

Additionally the same agency will be responsible for:
- Developing and supervising the application, by its members, the regulations governing the internal functioning of the system
- Training of its members for the in practice application of the system
- The internal auditing of the system
- Linking together, in an integrated way all participating units in the system.

In Fig. 1 the whole system is summarily illustrated.

Conclusion: Under these conditions the distribution of certified pork in the market, supported with accessibility of the consumer to all information stored in the data bank, operating by the agency functioning and supervising the system, will be recognized through its special trade mark in connection with the trade mark of AGROCERT. Further it is hoped that the product will enjoy premium prices.

References:

O 76 Reduction of Salmonella choleraesuis contamination in pork carcasses by vaccination

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Summary: Salmonellosis is a common clinical and subclinical infection of pigs. The species adapted serovar S choleraesuis predominantly produces a septicemic disease in swine. Disease in other species, including humans, is rare compared to enteric type infections from non-host adapted serovars such as S typhimurium. However, when host adapted serovars infect alternate species, disease can be severe. Vaccination with an avirulent live S choleraesuis vaccine, Enterisol® SC-54, significantly reduces prevalence and quantity of infection in pigs. Additionally, those pigs that remain culture positive have two logs or more reduction in the quantity of S choleraesuis present. Vaccination of pigs as young as one day of age is successful. Where these infections are of concern in the human population, vaccination of pigs may provide dramatic reductions of the organism swine, reducing risk in food items of swine origin.

Keywords: prevalence, vaccination, Enterisol® SC-54, control

Introduction: Salmonella infections in pork have been linked to outbreaks of food born disease in humans. Those practices that reduce the level of contamination or carriage of Salmonella in carcasses that arrive at abattoirs should assist in reducing contamination of post-harvest pork products. In some cases, Salmonella choleraesuis, a host adapted Salmonella, may play an important role in human disease. While typically a rare infection in humans, some countries report significant problems with S choleraesuis infections in humans (Chui et al., 2002). In some areas, the prevalence of S