



United States Department of Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

1400 Independence
Avenue, SW.
Washington, D.C.
20250

NOV 1 2018

Ms. Casey Lynn Gallimore, Director
Regulatory and Scientific Affairs
North American Meat Institute
1150 Connecticut Avenue, NW.
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Gallimore,

Thank you for your comments regarding the *Notice of Request for a New Information Collection: Consumer Research on the Safe Handling Instructions (SHI) Label for Raw and Partially Cooked Meat and Poultry Products and Labeling Statements for Ready-to-Eat and Not-Ready-to-Eat Products*.

Regarding your comment about actions based on what the results may show, the primary goal of this information collection is to validate, via consumer research, that a revised SHI label empirically shows an improvement in consumer food safety behaviors compared with the current SHI label. Following the completion of the consumer research, the Agency will use the study results in a cost-benefit analysis to assess whether the benefits from revising the SHI label (i.e., the potential reduction in foodborne illness) exceeds the cost to industry to revise the label. The Agency will consider the findings of the cost-benefit analysis to assess whether a change to the current SHI label is warranted.

Regarding your comment about flexibility with any label that may be developed, the consumer research that is being conducted as part of the proposed study will consider 27 alternative label designs to determine the label format that best attracts consumer attention, followed by a behavior change study that will examine which label design best results in adherence to recommended food safety practices. The label designs to be tested in the consumer research are limited to options that are considered realistic for industry. For example, the Agency does not plan to test label designs that require the use of specific or multiple colors which would be costly to industry to implement or label designs that are larger than those currently in use. Furthermore, the Agency agrees that the current SHI instruction to “cook thoroughly” needs to be revised.

The consumer research will test alternative designs that provide specific instructions to use a food thermometer and to cook to the recommended internal minimal temperature.

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The results of the consumer research will help the Agency determine the label design that will be most effective at encouraging consumers to follow recommended safe handling practices for raw and partially cooked meat and poultry products.

Thank you for your interest and support of this study.

Sincerely,



Roberta Wagner
Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development