



NATIONAL MEAT ASSOCIATION

1970 Broadway, Suite 825, Oakland, CA 94612
Ph. (510) 763-1533 or (202) 667-2108 • Fax (510) 763-6186
staff@nmaonline.org • <http://www.nmaonline.org>

October 23, 2007

Dr. Richard Raymond
Under Secretary for Food Safety
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Dr. Raymond,

National Meat Association welcomes the new agency actions explained by you and your senior staff in today's announcement. We agree that we must all make a greater effort to control this dangerous pathogen. Even one recall or one human illness attributed to *E. coli* O157:H7 is too many.

NMA has redistributed important documents that explain industry best practices, we've hosted teleconferences to discuss effective strategies and we've convened with industry partners to discuss new ways to combat *E. coli* O157:H7.

As you know, we are supporters of your risk-based inspection initiative. We are also watching closely your studies of other pathogenic strains of *E. coli* and the new approach to testing which will increase the number of pulse field gel samples. We agree that we are on the right track to lowering *E. coli* numbers, and we look forward to working with your teams in outreach and to bolster attendance at your training sessions expected around the country.

National Meat Association is anxious for the opportunity to participate later this fall in your meetings on this critical topic. We are a partner in cooperation to increase food safety.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Russell
Director of Communications
and Government Relations