

**Council for Native American
Farming and Ranching, Meeting: August 14-15, 2012
CD7 8-14 Track01 to Track05**

[Start of CD7 Track 1. Note: Due to distance of some speakers from the audio recorder, some words and phrases are indiscernible.]

Joanna Stancil: As we transition to our next presentation, I think -- hopefully the individuals are here. Our break refreshments did arrive. Please help yourself. Bring your refreshment back and we'll just continue on with the meeting. There looks like water, soda, coffee, juices. I'm going to have to figure out if we don't use them up how we're going to not have to pay for them or get them back on our deal for tomorrow.

Next, from USDA Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services is Pam Phillips, Outreach Chief, Office of Strategic Initiatives, Partnerships, Outreach, Food and Nutrition Services where she's from.

Pam Phillips: Hi everybody. As I was sitting out there with one of your colleagues, I was wondering if I'd get an opportunity to speak to you about our nutrition and assistance programs. And I'm pleased to be here representing our agency and the work that we do to improve nutritional health for all Americans within this nation. We do have a lot of involvement in the Indian community. And I'm going to, for the sake of time, I'm going to give you an overview of some of our programs and resources that help you maneuver our programs.

First of all, the mission. Food Nutrition Service was formally known as the Food and Consumer Service. It administers the Nutrition Assistance Programs for the Department of Agriculture. The mission is to provide children and needy families better access to food and a more healthful diet. And when we think in terms of the term "outreach," one of the things -- the key aspects of outreach is enhancing awareness. And for us, it's enhancing awareness of eligibility criteria and eliminating barriers to participation. No one should go hungry in America, and so there are 15 nutrition assistance programs as well as dietary guidelines that help get us to the point of combating hunger and improving nutritional health. I'm going to go through many of them that you see listed there.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans forms the basis of our nutrition assistance programs. And what we're doing with the Dietary Guidelines is that we're targeting ages two and older in consuming fewer calories, making informed food choices, and being physically active to attain and maintain a healthy weight, reduce the risk of chronic disease, and promote overall health. And we do this through MyPlate, which I'm going to speak about further later on in the presentation.

Our programs are federally funded, and they are administered through the states. And tribes can also directly administer with CSFP and FDPR. Tribes and tribal organizations

can be reimbursed for providing meals in a variety of settings. While states are by legislation responsible for administering the other programs, nonprofit organizations can provide services to tribal communities and enter into agreements with state agencies to deliver those services. Examples include the Bureau of Indian Education for School Meals and the Boys & Girls Clubs for the Child and Adult Care Food Program or the Summer Food Service Program, which feeds hungry children when school is out.

SNAP is the national program name formerly known as the Food Stamp Program. And each state may call it something else. And the program provides a monthly benefit for food purchases and service one in seven Americans, assisting more people in Indian country than any other federal nutrition program. In 2009, approximately 1.4 million American Indians or Alaskan Natives participated in SNAP each month, which was an increase over the prior year.

One thing I do need to emphasize is that anyone can apply for SNAP; however, individuals and families in Indian country cannot participate in SNAP and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations or FDPIR, which we'll discuss shortly. Under SNAP, the benefit amount depends on income, resources such as cars, bank accounts, and family size. Upon qualification, applicants receive benefits within 30 days. There is a prescreening tool on the website which helps individuals

determine their eligibility to receive benefits. The prescreening tool is not an application for SNAP, but it helps you understand the sorts of criteria that are relevant in determining eligibility.

SNAP Nutrition Education is a vital component, which again incorporates the Dietary Guidelines to make sure that when one is functioning within the limited budget that there are very valid food choices that are made in the process. And states have an option of providing nutrition education to SNAP recipients as part of their program operations.

The Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations. Households may participate in FDPIR as an alternate to the Special Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP. It provides commodity foods to low-income households, including elderly living on Indian reservations and to Native American families residing in designated areas near reservations and in the state of Oklahoma. The program provides monthly food packages with products that include frozen beef and poultry, canned beef, fish, canned fruits and vegetable soups, spaghetti sauce, and so on. The majority of the programs also receive fresh fruits and vegetables through a partnership between FNS and the Department of Defense. Approximately 77,000 individuals participate in FDPIR each month.

[End of CD7 Track 1]

[CD7 Track 2]

Pam Phillips: Just to reiterate, you cannot participate in both programs. And households are certified based on income and resource standards set by the federal government.

And how does it work? Well, there is a process, as there always is. USDA purchases and ships USDA foods to the ITOs and state agencies. USDA foods are selected from a list of available foods. Those administering agencies store, distribute the foods, and then determine applicant eligibility. USDA provides the administering agencies with funds for program administrative costs. And like all of our nutrition assistance programs, there is a strong nutrition education component to the way the program operates.

Low-income American Indian and non-Indian households that reside on a reservation and households living in approved areas living near reservations in Oklahoma need to contain at least one individual who is a member of a federally recognized tribe and are eligible to participate. Households certified based on income and resource standards set by USDA must be recertified at least every 12 months. And also, households with elderly or disabled members may be certified up to 24 months.

Since Fiscal Year 2008, FNS has provided about \$1 million in administrative funding annually to support nutrition education. The goal of the Food Distribution Program Nutrition

Education Funding is to enhance the nutrition knowledge of participants towards helpful lifestyle change. Grants are subject to appropriated funding in fiscal year 2012 as well as awarded for projects that include conducting classes on basic nutrition and basic cooking, recipe development, and so on.

FNS has also developed a FDPR Household Certification Training Course to help ITOs administer the program. The course is comprised of nine modules, and the knowledge attained in the training will help staff provide the best support possible for current and potential FDPR participants.

There is also a three-year national study that started this fiscal year which works to obtain an updated demographic profile of participants and measure FDPR's contribution to participants' food supply. The three-year study is seeking to be as representative as possible and will include Indian tribal organizations and state agencies with varying levels of program participation. You can get more information about FDPIR from the Web page, and also application process and agencies wishing to participate also.

Now, we're going to move on to our other programs. In addition to SNAP and FDPR, Special Nutrition Programs specifically target populations ranging from infant children to older Americans. A key program to achieve that objective is WIC, which serves low-income pregnant women, breastfeeding and

non-breastfeeding postpartum mothers, and infants and children up to five years of age. It provides supplemental foods, nutrition education, referral and access to health and human services. The program is focused on reducing the risk through early on emphasis on healthy eating.

Applicants must meet categorical residential, nutritional, and income requirements for WIC. Each month, those who qualify receive vouchers or electronic benefits on an EBT card to purchase specific foods that are based on individualized nutrition needs. The WIC program is well utilized. However, there is diminished participation from the older WIC child, presenting a slight nutritional gap prior to entrance into school and the availability of school meals.

There are two WIC farmers' market programs. One provides cash to state agencies and Indian tribal organizations and operates in 45 states. The participants are issued coupons in addition to their regular WIC benefits. The Seniors Farmers' Market provides low-income seniors with coupons they can use to purchase fresh fruit and vegetables. It also works to expand consumption of agricultural commodities by expanding development and aiding the expansion of domestic farmers' markets.

The school day just got healthier with an enhanced focus on nutritional health under the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, which we'll speak about shortly. We have school breakfast programs

and school lunch programs. And the school lunch program provides nutritionally balanced and low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The school breakfast program helps students stay alert and perform better in class by starting each day with a nutritious meal and continuing that throughout the course of the day. These programs are typically administered by state education agencies which operate the program through local school food service authorities. And this particular chart shows the poverty guidelines and the Free Reduced and Paid Lunch under those guidelines.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program provides meals and snacks to participants in daycare facilities, also, meals to children in emergency shelters, and snacks. Daycare homes may be reimbursed based on location, with homes in needy areas receiving higher rates of reimbursement than homes in non-needy areas.

CACFP At-Risk. The Child and Adult Care Food Program also serves at-risk children 18 and under who are residents of emergency shelters or participants in after-school programs. Programs must have enrichment activities on site to support the meal service. Once available on a limited basis, a recent change in the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act extended program availability to all 50 states.

The Summer Food Service Program is an underutilized program that is needed to fill the gap when school is out and children are no longer having that possible one meal a day that keeps them going. The Summer Food Service Program has sponsors which must be organizations that are capable of managing a food service program. To be a sponsor, you must follow regulations and be responsible financially and administratively for running your program. Sites are specific locations in a variety of settings, including schools, recreation centers, playgrounds, parks, churches, community centers, day camps, and so on, everywhere where children congregate. Some organizations do not have the financial ability or administrative ability to run the program but can supervise a school food service for children along with other partner organizations.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program or TEFAP. Under the program, USDA buys the food, including process and packaging, and ships it to states. State agencies determine the criteria and work out details of administering and distribution. They select local organizations that either directly distribute to households or serve meals, also distribute to local organizations that perform these functions. The distribution network includes food banks, which in turn distribute the food to soup kitchens and food pantries that directly serve the public. Who can apply? Each state has rules and it's not

available on all areas. You can call the National Hunger Hotline at 1-866-348-6479 to find out where soup kitchens and pantries are located.

The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act which I mentioned earlier offered real reforms to school lunch and to school breakfast by improving the critical nutrition and hunger safety net for millions of children. We are currently engaged in a back-to-school effort right now to promote the benefits under this particular Act. What changed under the Act? Well, first of all, there was a first real reimbursement rate increasing over 30 years and also has the authority to set the nutritional standards for all foods sold in schools, including vending machines ala carte and school stores, use of Medicaid data to directly certify children who meet income requirements, and use of census data to determine school-wide income eligibility. Also, it emphasized the expansion of the CACFP that I referenced earlier to all 50 states and also gave more school nutrition information to parents, improving the quality of the commodity program support.

[CD7 Track 3]

Pam Phillips: Another effort that is under way to promote the nutrition assistance programs and their importance in the nutrition health of the nation is the ending childhood hunger effort. USDA and FNS are committed to having everyone join them

in this effort. Actions include volunteering and helping to recruit volunteers at any anti-hunger site or with any anti-hunger organization, donating money to anti-hunger causes, using professional skills in a volunteer capacity, and promoting activities that benefit those in need within communities, such as organizing a food drive, also supporting summer food service programs by providing a place or maybe transportation to assist that effort. If you go to www.endhunger.usda.gov, there is a Stakeholder's Guide that assists you with ways you can assist this effort.

I wanted to highlight the fact that we have been working aggressively in the area of FNS tribal consultation, and they occur through in-person opportunities, webinars, and conference calls. So be on the lookout for our schedules which are shared throughout our various Indian tribe intersects, and do participate because we want to know how you feel about our programs. And the transcripts of sessions are available online. There is a quarterly consultation schedule, and so we are looking forward to hearing all your comments on how we might administer our programs in a better way or expand the scope of our programs.

Now, I'm going to focus for just a few minutes and then we're going to let you go, or maybe there is one more person following me. Okay, I'm not the last one.

MyPlate. First of all, we spoke about the Dietary Guidelines as a basis of nutrition assistance. And MyPlate, consider that the communication vehicle. There was a MyPyramid. Are you all familiar with MyPyramid? Okay. The MyPlate we think is more visually comparable to understanding the processes of how the various foods contribute to health and nutrition. And it kind of shows foods to increase and foods to reduce and the importance of water as well as abstinence from sugary drinks.

Let's Move! in Indian country is also a focus that looks at not only the nutritional health but also the importance of physical fitness. With childhood obesity a national health crisis, the threat to Indian country is not just the health but to the weakening of the fabric of the Indian communities, putting the next generation at increased risk and threatening tribal ways of life. Overweight children are overwhelmingly more likely to be obese as adults, and obesity in adulthood robs the community of active community elders. On average, obese adults live shorter lives and are less able to contribute to their leadership roles. Native communities depend on their younger generations to uphold tribal traditions and culture and pass on heritage. However, today's native youth may not grow to be as old or as active as their elders, evoking community concern and ways at looking at alleviating this path.

So, Let's Move! in Indian country has goals, very specific goals of having fit and energetic vibrant youth. Let's Move! in Indian country works with the Bureau of Indian Education Schools and high native population public schools to promote nutritional health as well as physical fitness.

FNS' role is to promote access to nutrition programs and to promote a healthier school environment through our Team Nutrition, Healthier U.S. School Challenge, and training on USDA programs. Now, some outreach resources that also assist the process of understanding our programs is the National Hunger Hotline. If you needed food help today, you could dial that number, and they will look within their database and indicate where you could go for immediate food help. The hotline staff can answer questions about our programs and how to apply, and it's a free call. On the other hand, if you have an organization that provides services, we want to know. We want to include your organization within our database.

Also, there is an FNS Consumer Guide. All of our publications are available for free, and they can be ordered from the website. And this particular guide is targeted to those in need, including those who are newly eligible who may not be aware of nutrition assistance.

There are also numerous helpful Web resources, including a page called Get Involved! that will also get you to all of the

programs, as well as indicate some of the initiatives we have under way from an outreach and partnering perspective. And if you'd like more information, there is a Web address that you might send your questions to, as well as ask me here today. So thank you so much. Are there any questions?

Joanna Stancil: All right. Gilbert?

Gilbert Harrison: Good afternoon. [Indiscernible]. One of the issues we have is that the foods that are being served by [indiscernible] there's a lot of waste because kids [indiscernible] we experience a lot of waste over that, and other ways that the school board [indiscernible].

Pam Phillips: Yes. That is a recurrent problem. It's age-old. I think it's going to involve your working together with your School Food Service people and see if you can get maybe more improved recipes there within the schools so that it can be both interesting and nutritional at the same time. You didn't indicate what the, I guess, attitude of your School Food Service folks are regarding that.

Gilbert Harrison: It seems like what we're hearing is that the type of menu is set [indiscernible]. But do they have to have a set menu? I don't think that's right.

Pam Phillips: I don't think they have to. Now, the Bureau of Indian Affairs or Bureau of Indian Education may have more of

a set criteria, but usually, the School Food Service Authority works to establish the menus within their districts.

Joanna Stancil: Mary has been waiting. Is that a response to this, Mary? Is yours a different question?

Mary Thompson: It's a response.

Lisa Pino: Actually, I just want to follow up. It's a great question. This is Lisa Pino with the Civil Rights Office, formerly of the Food Nutrition Service. It's an excellent question. It's also a complicated one. But one thing I wanted to add was that on December 13th, 2010, President Obama signed the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act, which is really the most radical improvement that we've had to school meals in the last 30 years. And actually, it's just this fall that all that great legislation will begin to be implemented, and it includes everything from having to serve fruits and vegetables everyday, having to serve water, having to actually serve fruits and vegetables on the plate because a lot of kids won't even think about tasting it unless it's on the plate, new regulations on vending machines, much stricter nutritional requirements based on our Dietary Guidelines, which we get from the Institute of Medicine, significantly lower salt sodium content and trans fat.

So it is a big cultural change, and so part of the issue is that the younger the kids are exposed to healthier foods, healthier eating, the more likely they are going to retain those

behavioral changes for life. It doesn't happen overnight. Families, getting the support of the families is also necessary, as well as the school. We're happy to get information and follow up specifically for schools in the Navajo Reservation in Arizona. But you know the expression, "It takes a village?" It really does sometimes. But this legislation really is a significant step in the right direction to that effect.

[CD7 Track 4]

Joanna Stancil: All right. I think Mary has a question, and then Edward.

Mary Thompson: A comment on the quarterly consultations that you had listed in there, and that may be something that we could be notified on so that we could pass it on so that people could make their comments. Also, on that same, that three-year study that you were talking about, that may be a place where you can look at any ways in the program that people can make suggestions there. Because I was thinking about -- you were talking about shipping it through the states and everything, and I'm wondering what kind of cost that was when it could have been right there.

Pam Phillips: Yes.

Mary Thompson: Just that we be notified when these consultations are for the --

Pam Phillips: We'll make sure that you're notified.

Mary Thompson: Along these and any other consultations that may come up that we're not aware of.

Joanna Stancil: Well, on behalf of OTR, we're updating the OTR website, and we're investigating things that we can add to it. And looking at the site that Rural Development has, this does list all their past and upcoming consultations. We'd like to integrate something like that into our site so that you could just go there. It'd be a link to some place else, but you could go there and see a calendar of what's coming up.

Pam Phillips: We also, on our website, on the Get Involved! page, we list all of the tribal consultations, as well as the webinars relating to our nutrition programs.

Joanna Stancil: Pam, can I ask that you make sure we have that? Because that could be a link on ours as well, and we go back because it's hard for us to keep track of all the wonderful things that are going on.

Mary Thompson: And with all the wonderful things that were going on and I'm hearing about some of these for maybe the first time, but it's like I know that there were 127, and now there are 1,227 now. Many more programs than I had imagined, so I hope you're able to get through there.

Joanna Stancil: And your head is going to hurt for the rest of the evening from all the stuff. I think Ed you had a question?

Edward Soza: I just wanted to -- I also sit on a school board for [indiscernible] on our reservation. And we had that problem, the same problem that you've mentioned. It was pretty simple. We fired the cook we hired [cross-talking] -- there are certain foods that should be served. Broccoli, who likes broccoli? We eat broccoli, though. Carrots, celery [cross-talking] --

Joanna Stancil: But you can mix broccoli and cookies and other things, and it gets in them through another source.

Edward Soza: This guy that we hired, he's a Latino gentleman. His [indiscernible] is good. I stop by for lunch every now and then [cross-talking] --

Joanna Stancil: He's food testing.

Male Voice: [Indiscernible] --

Edward Soza: The school board, we got together and it was pretty simple to fix, I thought.

Pam Phillips: I think we could also probably get you some guidance on how the menus are determined through the BIE and see what level of input you might be able to have. So if you have a card I can take with me, I'll give you my card. Okay. All right.

Joanna Stancil: Just for personal, as the DFO, there is a question I have. How often do we meet with the children though and ask them to help with the menu planning in a school system?

I used to teach school and had to do lunchroom duty. And I was horrified to see the amount of all the foods and vegetables that not only sail through the air, used as weapons against each other, but that were just taken and thrown, even if their parents were buying them the meals, and into the trash can. And at least we would try to intercept them and do something with an afternoon snack or something. But I've never heard the children being part of planning a menu of --

Pam Phillips: I think that would be a very proactive food service system that would incorporate those concerns. I think what we're trying to do under the Healthier Hunger-Free Kids Act as well as the current The School Day Just Got Healthier is engage parents as well as children as well as educators in the process so that it isn't unidimensional, that it is multidimensional and involves a lot of input as well as Edward's good cooking.

Joanna Stancil: Did you have something else? Gilbert, did you have a closing? And then Lisa.

Gilbert Harrison: I think you sort of hit the point right there because I was just talking about -- Lisa, the home has a lot to do with what the kids eat.

Pam Phillips: Yes.

Gilbert Harrison: Because I know on the reservation where as a school board, most of the people that we basically work

with or the kids that come to these schools are low-income. So right there, they basically scrap together what's available to survive. But when the kids get to school, they've already had [Indiscernible], but it's very good, [Indiscernible].

Pam Phillips: Yes.

Gilbert Harrison: [Indiscernible].

Pam Phillips: And that singular school meal or two school meals that are received through breakfast and lunch may be the only opportunity for healthy foods that child gets in the entire day. That's why it's so important, and that's why the Summer Food Service Program is important, as well as localized backpack programs that also give children an opportunity to take food home for the weekend. So we continue to work.

Joanna Stancil: Lisa, did you have a comment? And then if we're okay, we'll close out and move on.

Lisa Pino: Yes. I just wanted to end on a positive note and with some inspiration because it's a complicated topic. And just like we didn't get here overnight, we're not going to find the solution overnight. It's kind of like our Under Secretary Kevin Concannon always talks about it's similar to smoking decades back when it was ubiquitous everywhere and look at how far we've come. But I did want to add that there are some initiatives that we've really emphasized recently that can provide some inspiration and change how kids think.

One of my very favorites is the Farm to School Program where the farmers actually visit the classrooms, and then the kids actually visit the farms. And it's such a powerful transformation because today, a lot of kids think that food really comes from plastic and cardboard boxes. And when you see how they change their attitudes about food because they understand they have to put a seed in the ground and you have to nourish it with water and sunshine, they take a sense of accountability and ownership, and then they are excited to eat those fruits and vegetables, and then they go home and they become the ambassadors for healthy eating. And then they start telling their parents and families to shop, cook, and eat differently. So that's something else to think about.

And another one of my favorite examples is I visited a school in Vermont that did like a Master Iron Chef for kids, which was so much fun. But it costs a little bit of money but not a lot, but it's something to think about. And there are kids that either were kind of shy or going through some academic trouble, didn't really fit into like sports or certain clubs. And they got really excited and formed groups and teams and had to come up with recipes for their school breakfast and school lunch programs that met so many criteria, like it had to be affordable, it had to be healthy, it had to taste good. And then they were given prizes. And again, like when it becomes

fun and exciting and competitive in a positive way, it's amazing how kids react.

So you're absolutely right, Gilbert. It happens so fast that attitudes are shaped, but because they are young, there is still some hope, so we all got to work together to make it happen. And we're happy to follow up and provide more information on those ideas and initiatives. Thanks.

Joanna Stancil: Thank you. Thank you very much, Pam.

Pam Phillips: Thank you.

Joanna Stancil: Let's see.

[CD7 Track 5]

Joanna Stancil: Do we have Phillip in the room?

Phillip Derfler: Yes.

Joanna Stancil: Yes, we do. Yay for sticking in there. Thank you. And you can take coffee up there if you need it. Thank you. Phillip is with Food Safety and Inspection Service. He is the deputy administrator.

Phillip Derfler: I want to start out by recognizing [indiscernible] there. She helped me a whole lot with this presentation, and so refer to her if you have a question.

I'm from the Food Safety Inspection Service. We are the public health regulatory agency within the Department of Agriculture. Our job is to ensure that the meat, poultry, and egg products that you get and you eat are safe, wholesome, and

properly labeled. We receive our authority from the Federal Meat Inspection Act and Poultry Products Inspection Act and the Egg Products Inspection Act. The authority that those statutes grant is given to the secretary, who then delegates it to our under secretary, who then delegates it down to our administrator. We are one agency under secretary mission area, and so some of the people who have been before me have a long list of different agencies. We're just the one so we're fairly simple.

We have about 9,000 employees across the country; 8,000 of them are either in slaughter plants or in processing plants. And our field force is divided into 15 districts, which, at the end of September, will go down to 10 districts. We've made the reduction because we think it will help us be more consistent across the country, but also in the long term, it will be more efficient for us to do so.

I want to start out by saying what do we not do? That may be an odd way to start, but what we -- if you are a farming and ranching advisory committee. We are not allowed to have anything to do with farmers and ranchers. Our jurisdiction starts when the cows or the pig or the sheep or the goats or the chickens or the turkeys are brought to a slaughter plant. Once it's brought on to the premises, that's when our jurisdiction begins. First thing we do is make sure that the animals are

humanely handled as they're taken from the truck to be slaughtered. But on the way, we look at each animal to make sure that it doesn't have any conditions that would disqualify it from being safe for use in food. And if it is, we will condemn that animal before it is slaughtered.

So then the question is what do we do? In slaughter plants, we look at every carcass on a carcass by carcass basis, and we look for a few things on the carcass. First of all, traditionally, what we have done is we looked for signs of zoonotic disease that would make the carcass unsafe, the meat of the carcass unsafe for people to eat. We also look for fecal material, dirt, the sorts of things that have to be, that would create problems if it was used for food.

But as we've gotten through further, it's become more and more that our focus is on pathogens. And so we test animals to make sure to see whether or not they have E. coli O157:H7. The meat of the animal, we test it to see whether it has E. coli O157:H7 or Salmonella or other pathogens.

And so in addition to in the slaughter plants, we visit processing plants, plants that cut up the meat that they get from the slaughter plant, plants that grind the meat that they get from the slaughter plant, plants that make the sort of frozen dinners that you might eat in your home. And so we go to them and we make sure not only in slaughter plants but in

processing plants, we make sure that the conditions are sanitary. Because if the conditions aren't sanitary, then there is a possibility of the meat becoming contaminated with pathogens or with other things which would make it unsafe.

When we are satisfied that the meat is safe and wholesome, we apply our Mark of Inspection to the product. It's a round [indiscernible]. It's got the name of the establishment, and you'll see it in the store. If you look at a can of meat soup, you'll see our Mark of Inspection on it. If you buy a frozen meat dinner, you'll see our Mark of Inspection on it. So we inspect all meat and poultry products. We also inspect meat and poultry products that are imported into the United States. We have inspection personnel at every port of entry, and they will get every shipment. Some of them we just sort of look at the integrity of the boxes. Some we actually open the boxes, examine the product. Some we actually do microbiological testing.

The only countries that can ship to the United States are those that have inspection systems that are equivalent to ours. And so we do a review of the laws of the foreign country, and then we send over auditors to make sure that in action, the country is delivering the system the way it says it will.

And we also, once product enters commerce, we have people looking at it to make sure that it doesn't become contaminated

on its way to the consumer. So we'll look at the conditions under which it's held. We send people into grocery stores to sample ground beef to make sure it doesn't have E. coli O157:H7. So we actually, from the slaughter plant to the store, we provide full coverage. The other thing that we do is we make sure that the labels of the products comply with our regulations. We review every label before it's allowed to be put on the product. So we comprehensively regulate meat, poultry, and egg products.

In addition to those things, we also provide information. We provide information to consumers on how to safely cook the product. We also provide information on how to safely handle the product. So you may have seen some television commercials which talk about clean, separate, cook, and chill. That's how you have to handle meat so that it doesn't become contaminated. So we do try and provide consumer information.

We also provide information to industry. When we come out with a new regulation or new set of requirements, we provide information to industry to try and help them understand what they need to do in order to fully comply. And this is actually the area in which we would have the most contact with farms because in order to, for example, make sure that any E. coli O157 is minimized or Salmonella is minimized, what we do is we provide -- we have provided information to industry, the

slaughter plants to share with their suppliers on the best practices on how to minimize the possibility of Salmonella or E. coli on their products.

We also oversee state programs. And there are two ways that a state can have a meat or poultry program. The first is they can have an "equal to" program. That means it doesn't have to be exactly the same as ours, but it has to accomplish the same basic things. We audit the states to see whether they are. There are 27 states that have equal to programs.

In addition, last week, we started another new program as a result of the 2008 Farm Bill. That is, there is an opportunity for states now to participate and to help us and to do state inspection of plants which would allow the product to move in interstate commerce. If a state has a program that the meat or poultry can only stay within the state if the state inspects it. We're the only ones, up until last week, we're the only ones who could inspect meat or poultry that could move in interstate commerce. But as a result of the new program, a state can inspect and they can apply the federal market inspection. Ohio last week became the first state to participate in that program.

So there are three topics that I want to spend a little bit of time on that I think will be of particular interest to you, or at least based on what I know. First of all is mobile slaughter. We're aware that there sometimes are a lot of small

farmers who have cows or pigs that want to get their product slaughtered, want to get their animals slaughtered, but there is either not a slaughter plant near enough for them where they can regularly send their products to or for whatever reason, they might want to slaughter it themselves. There are trucks that you can either purchase or go in and form a consortium to get which are actually mobile slaughter plants. They can drive around from farm to farm and do slaughter on each farm. There are a number of them around the country. We've been working with the Know Your Farmer program on this. We actually, we'll assign an inspector to go with the truck so that there can be the slaughter of the animals.

One thing that I didn't say, you cannot operate a slaughter plant or a processing plant unless you're under inspection, unless it's a slaughter plant, unless we have an inspector on premises, if you're a processing plant, unless you're visited at least once a shift by our inspection personnel. So mobile slaughter is now a possibility, if you're interested or if you're aware of anybody who is interested in doing that, you can contact our district office, and the district office will work with you and ultimately give you a grant of inspection and get an inspector to go there.

Second is horse slaughter. We have periodically been contacted by some tribes about the possibility of slaughtering

horses. Up until the 2012 budget, from 2006 to 2012, it was not -- horse slaughter was banned by Congress. They prohibited us from spending any money to do inspection of horses for slaughter. In the 2012 Farm Bill, that provision was removed. Now, no one is yet slaughtering horses because of the six-year hiatus. A number of our methods became out of date, particularly for testing for drug residues.

[CD7 Track 6]

Phillip Derfler: So we are in the process of validating our methods and updating them. So we're in the process of putting together an inspection system so that people will be able to slaughter horses, if you're interested in doing that.

Now, tribes have come forward to us, and so let me explain. There are three alternatives for how slaughter would work. The first is the tribe can become, can establish a Meat Inspection Agency on the reservation. And as long as that tribal agency was equal to ours just like a state agency was equal to ours, that is, it provides the same kind of inspection, then we would find it equal to. The problem is that you could only, as I said, ship it within intrastate; that is, if they slaughter a horse, they could only sell the horse meat on the reservation, on the boundaries of the reservation. You couldn't ship it off [cross-talking] --

That brings up a second alternative, again, which I talked about, which is [cross-talking] -- an identical program to ours where essentially, the tribe could become an arm of the federal government and could provide inspection on the reservation if it was the same as, had identical provisions, then the horses that they inspected could ship in interstate commerce. The problem is that really becomes quite expensive. Expectations about the lab, the lab has to be the same as ours. Our labs meet the highest standard internationally, so that may be a problem. The third thing is if anyone is interested in slaughtering horses, you can just get federal inspection and then you would be able to ship the horse meat in commerce.

Male Voice: Internationally too?

Phillip Derfler: I'm sorry?

Male Voice: Internationally too?

Phillip Derfler: Internationally too, yes. I mean as a matter of fact, the real market for horse meat is Europe, so probably, it's not going to be economically viable unless you could ship it there, which is why you need to ship it interstate.

And then the last thing is bison slaughter. We've been approached various times about bison slaughter. What I should tell you is bison is not subject to the Meat Inspection Act. In other words, you can slaughter bison without having federal

inspection. We have a Voluntary Inspection Program in which we will give you a Mark of Inspection, which may enhance the marketability of the bison meat. But it's not required. You can ship it at interstate commerce without it. It's basically subject to the jurisdiction of the Food and Drug Administration, not ours, except if you're in the Voluntary Program. So, those are the sort of types of slaughter that we've been most frequently approached with by Indians.

So, just to sort of review slide, how does FSIS impact food safety? First, we try and reduce food-borne illness. Like I talked to you about, we're really interested in, we do everything we can to ensure that the meat is safe and healthy. Second, we reduce the risk to pregnant women. How does that happen? There is a pathogen called *Listeria monocytogenes*. It does not occur frequently, but when it occurs, it is very deadly, and it is particularly deadly to fetuses. A pregnant woman infected with *Listeria monocytogenes* has a very good chance of having a spontaneous abortion or miscarriage. So we work really hard to keep *Listeria monocytogenes*. It's found most frequently in ready to eat food. We work very, very hard to keep it out of our ready to eat meat and poultry products.

Third, we empower the consumer with knowledge. I talked about the materials that we put out in time to provide information to consumers about how to safely handle a product.

We provide the consumers about what to do when products are recalled. No matter how hard we try to make sure that the products that get our Mark of Inspection are safe and wholesome, we admit there are mistakes. There are about 60 to 70 recalls every year. I think I saw that we had a recall today. It's our 55th of the year, so it might get a little bit higher than that. But when there is a product that we're aware of in interstate commerce or in commerce in general, we move immediately to get that commerce out. We ask the company to recall it. If they won't, we take action against the product. We have our Mark of Inspection on it. That's our badge. That means more to us than anything, so we act as quickly as we can to try and get that product out of commerce.

And then finally, we work with other federal agencies. The president has a Safety Working Group. It's enhanced our cooperation with EPA, with FDA, and the other federal agencies, as well as the work we've done, we do with all the USDA agencies that you've heard from today. So we work really hard to cooperate.

So the last thing is how you get in touch with us. There are three portals really into FSIS if you need help. The one that probably you know exist is the Small and Very Small Plants portal. This is to provide information to our inspectors and to industry about what the rules are. And this is our consumer

hotline. We get all sorts of calls from people about questions about the products and whether what they are getting is safe and whether their product is subject to a recall or something like that. So that's hopefully a fairly quick view of the Food Safety Inspection Service. And if you have any questions, I'm happy and now I'm going to try and get out [indiscernible].

Joanna Stancil: Thank you. Does anyone have any questions? Janie?

Male Voice: Phil, are you the guys that grade the beef? Grade prime?

Phillip Derfler: Actually, no, we don't. AMS, Agriculture Marketing Service grades the beef. So we'll have an inspector sometimes in the same plant as the Ag Marketing Service, and actually, we have an agreement or sometimes we can cross-utilize each other if it's really a problem. We work really close with them. They do a lot of testing. And so today's recall, for example, testing was done by the Ag Marketing Service where they found E. coli O157 and we're doing the recall because we have the regulatory authority.

Janie Hipp: This is Janie. Thank you very much for being here. It's extremely helpful. And just for the council, when we have tribal leaders come to our offices and say, "We want to sell traditional foods into the School Lunch Program," the first calls we make are to you. We call FSIS. We call AMS. We call

FNS. And that gives you a sense that how many agencies really of the department can be involved in trying to not only explain how you do that but explain the different regulations that have to come into play and be considered when you are thinking about that as a business opportunity, which a lot of people are, or as a nutritional opportunity. And so I just express my appreciation to FSIS.

And Bea Herbert is in and out of Office of Tribal Relations all the time. She's very helpful to us, and she's also a contact person, and she's sitting around back there. But you all have lots of good folks out in the field that can help people walk to through how to even think about having a slaughter plant or how to even think about putting food into different avenues.

Phillip Derfler: [Indiscernible] agency, we like to think that we [indiscernible] do that.

[CD7 Track 7]

Joanna Stancil: I think we have one more question.

Jerry McPeak: Jerry McPeak from Oklahoma. I think I understood you to say that there are no horse slaughter plants even though we've opened this thing up for a year now.

Phillip Derfler: Well, two plants have applied.

Jerry McPeak: Ah, okay.

Phillip Derfler: One of them is New Mexico and [indiscernible] folks, but one in the state of Missouri and [indiscernible]. What we're doing though is they've got to earn mark of inspection. We can't put our mark of inspection on a product unless we can affirmatively find that that product is not adulterated. That means that that product is safe and wholesome. So in order for us to make that affirmative finding, we have to have the tools we need to make that finding which means when we test the meat, we have to know if it has any animal drug residue which could be harmful to the people that are going to consume it. Those methods are not available right now. We are developing them all from scratch. And so that's where we are right now.

Jerry McPeak: I used to work in a packing house. Why will the drug residue test that you're doing on cattle not work on the horses?

Phillip Derfler: Well, they are different species, but essentially, we've taken our cattle method and we're trying to validate them for horses for any differences or maybe even saying but we need to be able to assign and take any evidence because if we have to take action, we're going to have to be able to prove up our methods in court.

Jerry McPeak: Followup.

Phillip Derfler: Yes, sure.

Jerry McPeak: So we had horse slaughter plants before?

Phillip Derfler: The answer is yes, we had horse slaughter before, but the methods aren't as good, weren't as good --

Jerry McPeak: What method? Are we talking your methods or slaughter methods?

Joanna Stancil: Adulterations.

Phillip Derfler: No, our testing methods, our testing methods for drug residue.

Jerry McPeak: Followup. So is this driven by folks who don't understand that we're going to let them suffer, or is this driven by a true health issue? Is this politically driven, socially driven, or --

Phillip Derfler: [Indiscernible].

Jerry McPeak: Well, I'm still unpolitically correct, you wouldn't believe it. But I just want to know the real answer. Is it driven socially, politically, or for you, it's driven by the health thing, I guess, but --

Phillip Derfler: Yes. I mean --

Jerry McPeak: But I want to know how it's driven. What's really taking so long?

Phillip Derfler: It's really important, and really why we're doing this, the only reason why we're doing this is we need each method so that we know. There are drugs -- I mean [indiscernible] -- there are drugs that you don't want to eat.

The Food and Drug Administration, which is the agency that establishes tolerances for animal drugs in food, the meat in horse, they do not consider horses to be food animals. So therefore, where for a cow, in order to use a drug on a cow, because it's a food animal, you've got to be able to have a method that you can find the residue with that. Because horses are not food animals, they don't care. They just figure you [cross-talking] --

Jerry McPeak: They who don't care?

Phillip Derfler: Food and Drug Administration.

Joanna Stancil: FDA.

Phillip Derfler: So we have to develop the methodology, which is what we're doing now. And we're doing it as quickly as we can. It's taking us -- we've been doing it for a number of months and we'll have a couple more, two or three more months, but yes.

Jerry McPeak: I hate to belabor this point, but this is a big issue in our area because in California, they are turning horses loose on the highway kind of like dogs. They're blotting out the tattoos, and it's just going to happen, folks, so catch a clue here. But we were shipping horse meat overseas six years ago.

Phillip Derfler: Right, yes.

Jerry McPeak: And I'm pretty sure they weren't drying up and feeding it to dogs.

Phillip Derfler: Well, I mean part of it though is you should know that the EU has gotten much, much, much stricter on horse meat. They now have required that the horse meat comes with what they call a passport, which means it's got to have a history of everything that that horse eating, that that horse has been treated, any drugs that have been given to that horse from birth until the time it was slaughtered. We don't have that. We're not at this point contemplating anything like that. This is a really big issue there. There are people really, really, really passionate on one side of it. There are people really, really passionate on the other side. We're trying to draw the [cross-talking] --

Jerry McPeak: And now you're talking about social and politics rather than health.

Phillip Derfler: I'm just telling you the truth. That's the reality, okay?

Jerry McPeak: Okay.

Michael Jandreau: Mike Jandreau. If that's a reality, how come they're doing it in Mexico and Canada? Do they have an approved methodology? Is their methodology out of sync?

Phillip Derfler: They may not be looking for drug residues the way we do. Mexico, I mean for example, we know in Mexico, I

mean, the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act implies to slaughter in the United States, we have to make sure that the horses are humanely treated. We know that that doesn't exist in Mexico. It may or may not exist in Canada. It depends on who you want to listen to. I've got to put up a program that [indiscernible], so we're doing that as quickly as we can, but it's going to take some time. The science [indiscernible].

Michael Jandreau: So would it be possible for you to provide to us an idea of the methodology that's being used in those particular areas of the world where it's happening? Because in our part of the country, there are so many horses, and I don't believe in killing horses myself, but it's still a part of the process. And everybody that is willing to get into it, in fact, I think the Pine Ridge Reservation had contemplated putting a slaughtering plant there, and they were working through the state on that. But can you give us the information that they're utilizing or can that be given to us?

Phillip Derfler: [Indiscernible] because Canada does ship meat to the United States. I'm not sure if they ship horse meat. Mexico doesn't. I know [indiscernible] so I can't tell you what's going on. [Indiscernible] I might be able to find out [indiscernible].

Michael Jandreau: Sure.

[End of CD7 Track07]

[CD7 Track 8]

Michael Jandreau: What about [indiscernible]

Phillip Derfler: That's not inspected. There's horse meat that's sent there, it could be sent -- we don't -- we only do for human food.

Michael Jandreau: [Indiscernible]

Male Voice: Because I'm telling you horses had been killed in Texas.

Phillip Derfler: Because since horse is an amenable species, it's got to be [indiscernible] illegal, so there shouldn't be anybody -- I mean is there?

Male Voice: You referred to a statute. Could you expound upon that that you had to adhere to? [Cross-talking] --

Phillip Derfler: The Federal Meat Inspection Act, which sets out all the requirements for how you go about slaughtering cows, sheep, goats. There are lists of species that [cross-talking] --

Male Voice: Correct me if I'm wrong. What you're saying, that if the United States does not meet the EU standards for horse passports, they're not going to buy it?

Phillip Derfler: That's essentially what they're threatening. There is right now no horses being slaughtered in the United States. However, we have had other dealings with the EU because we try and ship our meat with them. They don't like

the fact that we use antimicrobials on our meat. They don't believe in that. So we've had trouble getting beef into the EU. We've been to the World Trade Organization. We've won. They've gone around and tried to find a new way. So [cross-talking] --

Male Voice: It's a threat right now.

Phillip Derfler: Yes.

Jerry McPeak: Politics, Phillip.

Joanna Stancil: All right. Gilbert?

Gilbert Harrison: [Indiscernible] that's only if a horse be consumed by humans, right?

Phillip Derfler: Yes. But because it's an amenable species, it can be slaughtered, except under -- because it has to be slaughtered but inspected by us. Even if they choose not to [indiscernible] human food, under [indiscernible].

Gilbert Harrison: We're just overrun by horses on the Navajo, and every so often, we [indiscernible] that's been killed by an automobile. That seems like even though it's not going to be consumed by humans, [indiscernible] has to be inspected. It just sort of seems like [indiscernible] too far. It seems to me like if the tribe wants to get rid of all these horses there decimating their land, they should be allowed to do whichever way they feel is appropriate because it's not going to be consumed by humans.

Phillip Derfler: I mean if they are going by statute, we would have no objection. I mean Congress wrote the law, right? But see, the problem is if it's not inspected, somebody slaughters it and says, "I'm going to take this [indiscernible] except for the fact they say, "Oops, I changed my mind." How are you going to know? So that's why basically you can't do it [indiscernible].

Jerry McPeak: Yes, thank you. You're probably already aware of this, but we are considering in Oklahoma a tax credit legislation to encourage the building of one of these because there is not going to be one on every street corner. You're going to have one in ever so many states. So from an economic development standpoint, that's a positive step. Now, people that think that you don't kill animals that have names [indiscernible]. But so your time frame of getting that done has a lot to do with some of us out in those states who may decide that we want or, and actually, the tribes are actually considering building one of these. So that time frame, do you have an approximation? Two years? Three years?

Phillip Derfler: The administrator has talked about by the end of the year, by the end of the calendar year. I mean we are -- when I say we're working on this method, we are working [cross-talking] --

Jerry McPeak: I believe you, sir.

Phillip Derfler: Yes.

Female Voice: Just hurry up.

[Cross-talking] --

Jerry McPeak: I'll believe you until you lie to me then I don't believe you anymore.

Phillip Derfler: The only caveat that I would tell you is there is a bill in Congress that's part of our appropriations. There are people who are trying to put in our appropriations a new ban using federal money [cross-talking] --

Jerry McPeak: Which is basically kind of what we have. No one has done anything in our area because we're afraid of [indiscernible].

Phillip Derfler: [Indiscernible]

Jerry McPeak: No, we're afraid. We're more afraid of [indiscernible].

Phillip Derfler: Okay.

Joanna Stancil: All right, thank you. Any other?

Female Voice: Thank you.

Joanna Stancil: Thank you so much for being with us. We're going to, as we prepare to adjourn, we still have our lovely social time together back at the hotel, and that's in the bar area.

Male Voice: We did work fast since we got a late start. Can you get one at each hand?

Joanna Stancil: We're providing you sodas and munchies.

Female Voice: Joanna, can we leave these here?

Joanna Stancil: I was told that this room should be secured tonight. We can leave our binders here.

Male Voice: I bet you people are going to try to [indiscernible].

Female Voice: Thank you, Joanna.

[End of transcript]