delayed, limited, or denied. What would be the principal benefits and limitations of these proposals? In implementing these proposals how could the benefits be best leveraged and the limitations mitigated?

Core Element #3: Response

3.1 What are the best practices, and what are the principal benefits and challenges to implementing the key response steps in the Plan? How do these vary by stakeholder (e.g., producers, manufacturers, retailers, consumers, Federal/State government, and foreign countries)?

3.2 What, if any, significant gaps are there in the key response steps and the associated FDA actions listed in the plan?

3.3 The Plan proposes two new legislative authorities to strengthen FDA's response capability: (1) Empowering FDA to issue a mandatory recall of food products when voluntary recalls are not effective, and (2) providing FDA enhanced access to food records during emergencies. What would be the principal benefits and limitations of each of these proposed authorities? In implementing these proposed authorities, how could the benefits be best leveraged and the limitations mitigated?

II. Comments

Interested persons may submit to the Division of Dockets Management (see **ADDRESSES**) written or electronic comments regarding this document. Submit a single copy of electronic comments or two paper copies of any mailed comments, except that individuals may submit one paper copy. Comments are to be identified with the docket number found in brackets in the heading of this document. Received comments may be seen in the Division of Dockets Management between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Please note that on January 15, 2008, the FDA Division of Dockets Management Web site transitioned to the Federal Dockets Management System (FDMS). FDMS is a Government-wide, electronic docket management system. Electronic comments or submissions will be accepted by FDA through FDMS only.

Dated: March 26, 2008.

Jeffrey Shuren,

Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning.

[FR Doc. E8–6833 Filed 4–1–08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4160–01–S

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration

[Docket No. FDA–2008–N–0183]

Third-Party Certification Programs for Foods and Feeds; Request for Comments

AGENCY: Food and Drug Administration, HHS.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is requesting comments on the use of third-party certification programs for foods and feeds, including pet foods. An increasing number of firms that sell foods to the public, such as retailers and food service providers, are requesting that their suppliers become certified as meeting food (and feed) safety and quality standards as a condition of doing business. FDA seeks more information on the existence and use of these types of programs to better understand how they can help to ensure that food products are safe, secure, and meet FDA requirements.

DATES: Submit written or electronic comments by May 19, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments to the Division of Dockets Management (HFA–305), Food and Drug Administration, 5630 Fishers Lane, rm. 1061, Rockville, MD 20852. Submit electronic comments to *http://www.regulations.gov*.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sharon Lindan Mayl, Office of Policy (HF–11), Food and Drug Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857, 301–827–3360.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Ensuring the safety of food for human and animal use is a shared responsibility between the public and private sectors. FDA has the authority to establish regulatory standards, inspect facilities, and take action if there are violations, but it is ultimately the responsibility of industry to ensure that food and feed intended for consumption in the United States meet applicable FDA standards. An increasing number of firms that sell foods and feeds (hereinafter foods) to the public, such as retailers and food service providers, are requesting that their suppliers, both foreign and domestic, become certified as meeting food safety and quality standards as a condition of doing business. In addition, domestic and foreign suppliers (such as producers, co-manufacturers, or re-packers) are increasingly looking to third parties to assist them in meeting U.S. requirements. FDA is seeking comment on current practices of third-party certification programs that work with food products and to ensure the supply chain is safe, secure, and meet FDA requirements.

A. Current Use of Voluntary Third-Party Certification Programs for Foods

A growing number of food firms require their suppliers to ensure their products are produced using ''best practices'' for food safety, quality, and security and that the supply chain is safe and secure. These firms often require their suppliers to meet nationally or globally recognized food safety standards and to verify that these standards are met through a third-party certification program. For example, the Global Food Safety Initiative requires food suppliers to have a factory audit certification against internationally recognized standards, which include the Safe Quality Food, British Retail Consortium, International Food Standard, and GlobalGAP. The Global Aquaculture Alliance has also established standards for aquaculture production and processing and created an accrediting body for certifiers from 30 countries. These types of private sector developed programs are being used in many foreign countries, as well as the United States.

B. Interagency Working Group on Import Safety

On July 18, 2007, the President issued Executive Order 13439 to establish the Interagency Working Group on Import Safety (Working Group). On November 6, 2007, the Working Group released an ''Action Plan for Import Safety: A Roadmap for Continual Improvement'' (Action Plan) (*http://www.importsafety.gov/report/actionplan.pdf*). The Action Plan contains 14 broad recommendations and 50 specific short- and long-term action steps to better protect consumers and enhance the safety of the increasing volume of imports entering the United States. The Action Plan stresses the importance of the private sector's responsibility for the safety of its products and the importance of ongoing private-sector mechanisms and experience as a basis for ongoing, substantive public-private collaboration. The public and private sectors have a shared interest in import safety, and substantive improvement will require the careful collaboration of the entire importing community.

Recommendation 2 of the Action Plan is to ''verify compliance of foreign producers with United States safety and security standards through certification.'' Third-party certification can augment the Federal Government's and the importing community's ability to ensure that products imported into the United States meet U.S. safety and security standards. The Action Plan states ''[f]or foreign producers, the ability to participate in voluntary certification programs could allow products from firms that comply with U.S. safety and security standards to enter the United States more quickly. This would facilitate trade, while allowing federal departments and agencies to focus their resources on products from non-certified firms or for which information suggests there may be safety or security concerns. This would allow federal departments and agencies to more effectively target their resources. It may not be necessary to establish certification programs for low-risk products.''

Action Steps 2.2 and 2.4 of the Action Plan call for the development of voluntary third-party certification programs based on risk for foreign producers of certain products who export to the United States and the creation of incentives for foreign firms to participate in voluntary certification programs and for importers to purchase only from certified firms.

In conjunction with the Action Plan, on November 6, 2007, FDA released its Food Protection Plan (FPP), a comprehensive initiative designed to bolster efforts to better protect the Nation's food supply (*http://www.fda.gov/oc/initiatives/advance/food/plan.html*).

Although certification by an independent third party would not replace an FDA inspection, and FDA would continue to inspect a firm itself, as appropriate based on risk, third-party certification could provide additional assurances of safety. In addition, third-party certification could provide FDA with important information about the ability of specific food suppliers to meet FDA requirements and to better focus the use of our resources based on risk. FDA believes that eligible third parties should include other Federal government, State government, and foreign government agencies and officials.

If FDA were to develop or recognize (or accredit) one or more independent third-party certification programs, we would provide an opportunity for both foreign and domestic firms to voluntarily participate. However, FDA would need sufficient confidence in the quality of the audits performed and the validity of the decisions to certify by the third parties as well as the independence of the third parties from the firms they certify before we would consider recognizing a third-party certification program.

One action FDA will take to implement the Action Plan and the FPP is to accredit independent third parties, or to recognize entities that accredit, to evaluate compliance with FDA requirements. This notice represents FDA's first step in soliciting public input in the design and development or recognition of third-party certification programs.

II. Request for Information

FDA is seeking information on the use of third-party certification programs. In addition to general information, we are posing several specific questions related to these types of programs.

1. What domestic and foreign third-party certification programs for suppliers are currently in use by U.S. companies?

FDA is aware of several third-party certification programs that are currently being used in the United States. We would like more information regarding these and other certification programs, the standards on which they are based, and who is currently using these third-party programs. In addition, we would like information on the standards and procedures used to ensure that the third parties used are independent (i.e., without conflicts of interest), the standards used to accredit third parties, who accredits these third parties, and how and by whom these third parties are audited and evaluated for performance. We would also like to know how national government bodies interface with or recognize these certification programs.

2. Do the current third-party certification programs ensure compliance with FDA requirements?

Third-party certification programs for foods are used widely in Europe. These types of certification programs are becoming more popular in other parts of the world, including the United States. FDA solicits comment on whether the requirements for certification used by these programs encompass FDA requirements. If not, what modifications need to be made for the U.S. marketplace? Should FDA recognize (or accredit) any of these programs? Should FDA participate in future modifications to any of these programs? If so, in what capacity?

3. What are the obstacles to private sector participation in these third-party certification programs?

Although the use of third-party certification programs is growing, they are not used by the majority of U.S. food firms. FDA seeks information about any barriers that may exist to using third-party certification programs. Are retailers and suppliers aware of these programs? Are these programs widely available? Are they cost effective? Are there particular obstacles for small businesses?

4. What incentives would increase participation in these third-party certification programs?

FDA recognizes that there are business and legal incentives to using third-party certification programs. We would like to know what incentives could increase participation in these certification programs. For example, would expedited treatment at U.S. ports of entry significantly encourage foreign suppliers to participate or domestic firms to make participation by foreign or domestic suppliers a condition of doing business with them? Would making the names of certified firms publicly available, such as through a publicly accessible database, significantly encourage participation in these programs by foreign or domestic suppliers? Would FDA considering certification as one factor in determining inspection priorities provide a significant incentive for foreign or domestic firms to participate? Are there other incentives that would increase participation for imported foods? For domestic foods?

III. How to Submit Comments

Interested persons may submit to the Division of Dockets Management (see **ADDRESSES**) written or electronic comments regarding this document. Submit a single copy of electronic comments to *http://www.regulations.gov* or two paper copies of any mailed comments, except that individuals may submit one paper copy. Comments are to be identified with the docket number found in brackets in the heading of this document. Received comments may be seen in the Division of Dockets Management between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Please note that on January 15, 2008, the FDA Division of Dockets Management Web site transitioned to the Federal Dockets Management System (FDMS). FDMS is a Government-wide, electronic docket management system. Electronic

comments or submissions will be accepted by FDA through FDMS only.

Dated: March 27, 2008.

Jeffrey Shuren,

Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning.

[FR Doc. E8–6705 Filed 4–1–08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4160–01–S

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Health Resources and Services Administration

National Advisory Council on Migrant Health; Notice of Meeting

AGENCY: Health Resources and Services Administration, HHS.

Action: In accordance with section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92–463), notice is hereby given of the following meeting:

Name: National Advisory Council on Migrant Health.

Dates and Times: May 4, 2008, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; May 5, 2008, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Place: InterContinental San Juan Hotel, 5961 Isla Verde Avenue, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00979, Telephone: (787) 791–6100, Fax: (787) 253–2510.

Status: The meeting will be open to the public.

Purpose: The purpose of the meeting is to discuss services and issues related to the health of migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families and to formulate recommendations for the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Agenda: The agenda includes an overview of the Council's general business activities. The Council will also hear presentations from experts on farmworker issues, including the status of farmworker health at the local and national levels.

The Council meeting is being held in conjunction with the National Farmworker Health Conference sponsored by the National Association of Community Health Centers, which is being held in San Juan, Puerto Rico, May 6–9, 2008.

Agenda items are subject to change as priorities indicate.

For Further Information Contact: Gladys Cate, Office of Minority and Special Populations, Bureau of Primary Health Care, Health Resources and Services Administration, 5600 Fishers Lane, Maryland 20857; telephone (301) 594–0367.

Dated: March 26, 2008.

Alexandra Huttinger,

Director, Division of Policy Review and Coordination.

[FR Doc. E8–6784 Filed 4–1–08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4165–15–P

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

National Institutes of Health

National Institute of Mental Health; Notice of Workgroup Meeting

Notice is hereby given of a meeting of the Strategic Plan Workgroup (SPWG) organized by the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC).

Audio of this workgroup meeting will be accessible to the public via a teleconference phone link, and there will be web-based access to information displayed at the meeting via computer/projector. Access information will be posted on the IACC Web site: *(http://www.nimh.nih.gov/research-funding/scientific-meetings/recurring-meetings/iacc/events/index.shtml);* to request reasonable accommodation, contact Tanya Pryor at *pryort@mail.nih.gov.* Due to the space limitation of the Conference Room, attendance at the meeting itself will be limited to SPWG and IACC members. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss current funding for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) research, as well as organize and tentatively prioritize proposed research initiatives that will be used to develop the IACC strategic plan for ASD research. Research priorities will be discussed at the next meeting of the IACC on May 12, 2008.

Name of Committee: Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee (IACC).

Type of meeting: Strategic Planning Workgroup.

Date: April 21, 2008.

Time: 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Agenda: Review of ongoing ASD research, proposed funding initiatives, and research resources; discussion and characterization of high priority research areas for developing the IACC strategic plan for ASD research.

Place: National Institutes of Health, Neuroscience Center, Conference Room D, 6001 Executive Blvd., Bethesda, MD 20892–9669.

Contact Person: Tanya Pryor, National Institute of Mental Health, NIH, 6001 Executive Boulevard, NSC, Room 6198, Bethesda, MD 20892–9669, 301–443–7153, *pryort@mail.nih.gov.*

Information about the IACC is available on the Web site: *http://www.nimh.nih.gov/research-funding/scientific-meetings/recurring-meetings/iacc/index.shtml.*

Dated: March 27, 2008.

Jennifer Spaeth,

Director, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.

[FR Doc. E8–6710 Filed 4–1–08; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS–R4–R–2008–N0004; 40136–1265–0000–S3]

J.N. ''Ding'' Darling National Wildlife Refuge, Lee County, FL

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment; request for comments; re-opening of comment period.

SUMMARY: We, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), intend to prepare a comprehensive conservation plan (CCP) and associated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents for J.N. ''Ding'' Darling National Wildlife Refuge. We provide this notice in compliance with our CCP policy to advise other agencies, Tribes, and the public of our intentions, and to obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to consider in the planning process. We reopen the comment period, which originally ended on August 13, 2007, as announced in the **Federal Register** on June 27, 2007 (72 FR 35254). If you have already submitted comments, you are not required to resubmit them.

DATES: To ensure consideration, we must receive your written comments by May 19, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Comments, questions, and requests for more information regarding the J.N. ''Ding'' Darling National Wildlife Refuge planning process should be sent to: Laura Housh, Regional Planner, Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, Route 2, Box 3330, Folkston, GA 31537.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laura Housh; Telephone: 912/496–7366, Extension 244; Fax: 912/496–3332.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Introduction

With this notice, we re-open the comment period and initiate our process for developing a CCP for J.N. ''Ding'' Darling National Wildlife Refuge in Lee County, FL. This notice complies with our CCP policy to (1) advise other Federal and State agencies, Tribes, and the public of our intention to conduct detailed planning on this refuge, and (2) obtain suggestions and information on the scope of issues to consider in the environmental document and during development of the CCP.