

# Poultry processors meet

By DIETER KRIEG  
**CAMP HILL** — Poultry processors from all over the state met here at Schandler's Restaurant last Tuesday to discuss some of the issues lying before them in 1976. The primary subject matters presented involved government regulations and USDA's involvement in the industry.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is reportedly experiencing some changes at the top level which are "working out pretty well for the moment but we're not sure how long it will last," said Lee Campbell.

The poultry official noted, however, that "in the next few years we may see some radical changes. USDA is beginning to think that there might be better (at least alternative) ways to do things. This is the first time during my 12 years in this position that I've seen this condition. To me that's encouraging."

Specific topics of discussion included linespeeds, the AQL inspection program, union negotiations and OSHA regulations. The conclusion in all cases was that there was too much regulation on the part of the government. But there was one item on processed poultry meat,

according to some of the which many of the 25 people present though they could move a step ahead of USDA. Present regulations are not stringent enough about keeping feathers out of processors, and a recommendation was made that the industry take it upon itself to tighten their standards. "After all, sooner or later the government is going to make us do it anyway," one member of the group said. Keeping processed poultry meat 100 percent feather-free is a problem, according to discussions which took place, but it should be a goal to be kept in mind.

Some issues confronting poultry processors all over the country are being hammered out now. Meetings have been held at various intervals, and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Earl Butz, recently recommended that the industry come up with a task force to determine what kind of policies should be developed.

One of the questions being considered is sample inspection, as opposed to a program where every bird is inspected. A technicality was brought up at that point

as to what inspection really is. Some inspectors are reportedly only looking at poultry - never toughing or feeling the bird. Inspection criteria and methods are being questioned, as well as labeling standards.

The task force is also looking into work being done by APHIS, OSHA, and other federal agencies which guide the industry. Noting the scope of the market, especially since world trade is involved, the poultry processors were in agreement that inspections are necessary and beneficial. Foreign inspections are being questioned, however.

Union negotiations are progressing, Campbell told the group, but nothing definite had been set up thus far. Clothes-changing time and overtime schedules are being scrutinized.

Poultry sausage is getting to be a pretty good commercial item, Campbell revealed, and he thinks it's

time that a few ground rules be set up for it. Recommendations have been made, but nothing has gelled yet. The present limit on fat content for poultry sausage is 26 percent. Some dissatisfaction was expressed with present standards which limit the amount of regular meat allowed in poultry sausage. They'd like to see the figure raised from its present 15 percent to a limit of 35 percent.

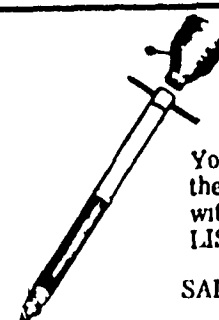
The Talmadge - Aiken inspection program seems to have come to a stand-still, according to Campbell. The program was initiated when states wanted to retain their inspection rights but could not afford the funds to keep them going. As a result, the federal government took over the responsibilities and is paying half the costs.

When complying with OSHA regulations, poultry processors are reminded to tell and agency not just what has been done, but how much

was spent, since OSHA seems to be impressed by figures.

In concluding remarks, the processors voted to send literature to high school home ec. teachers, county homes, and extension home economists to promote the

industry. A variety of pamphlets are being considered and interested processors are asked to contact Ed Lawless, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, for further information. Deadline for this program is Feb. 1.



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