

NASDA's 2002 FARM POLICY INITIATIVE
WORKING DOCUMENT FOR THE FOOD REGULATION & NUTRITION COMMITTEE
JULY 2000

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U.S. Agriculture Profile PRODUCTION - Issue Description	Tools to Succeed - Policies & Options	Comments/Recommendations
Management Skills <i>(The Marketing and International Trade Committee has lead responsibility for this issue)</i> Successful farming requires a solid management foundation. Training resources and programs should be made readily available for producers.		

U.S. Agriculture Profile MARKETS - Issue Description	Tools to Succeed - Policies & Options	Comments/Recommendations
Access Market access can be obtained through organics, nutraceuticals, functional foods and marketing programs; marketing orders and check-off programs. However, consumer misinformation and fraud/labeling issues stand to impede access.		
Consumer Preference Consumers need to be educated on food safety, including GMOs and organics so that they can make informed decisions.		
Mass vs. Niche Consumer preference		

U.S. Agriculture Profile TRANSPORTATION - Issue Description	Tools to Succeed - Policies & Options	Comments/Recommendations
Food Safety An improved and reliable transportation system for agriculture is essential for moving products from “farm to table.”		

U.S. Agriculture Profile STEWARDSHIP - Issue Description	Tools to Succeed - Policies & Options	Comments/Recommendations
Safe Food - Residues - Pathogens - Emergencies		
U.S. Agriculture has an opportunity to market foods as safest, wholesome, abundant, and affordable. There is a need to increase guidance and education on pesticide policy. Harmonization of pesticide policy and tolerances among trading policies is another important goal. These goals are hampered by incidents of food-borne illness, more science-based public health concerns, and reports of pesticide dangers and food scares (ex: Alar). EPA reexamination of pesticides under the 1996 Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) has already begun to result in restrictions or bans on pesticides. Policies may also be used as a trade barrier.		
Residues		
Pathogens		
Emergencies		

U.S. Agriculture Profile TECHNOLOGY - Issue Description	Tools to Succeed - Policies & Options	Comments/Recommendations
Food Safety		
<p>GMO's /Biotechnology The American agricultural industry has developed the world's safest, most productive, economically competitive and stable source of food and fiber by using the most advanced scientific knowledge available.</p> <p>Modern biotechnology is the fast-growing science that allows researchers to link traditional biology with new technologies incorporating chemistry, genetics, engineering, biochemistry, cell biology and computer science. Biotechnology can confer desirable traits to enhance pest and parasite resistance, improve nutrient utilization, improve the efficacy of biocontrol agents and reduce production inputs into the environment to assure the sustainability of agricultural production.</p> <p>A major constraint is consumer acceptance. Consumer groups and other have called for labeling and "right to know" requirements, which could move production decisions from farmers to government.</p>	<p>NASDA Policy 3.2 through 3.4 addresses biotech regulation. Policy options include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased state and federal efforts to educate consumers 2. Work with FDA, EPA and USDA to update biotech policies. 3. Internat'l negotiations to eliminate non-science based barriers to trade in biotech products 4. Oppose state level labeling requirements. 5. Needs to be a different term for GMO 6. More independent public research 7. The administration must inform state departments of agriculture, or work in partnership. 8. Federal and State cooperation 	

U.S. Agriculture Profile TECHNOLOGY - Issue Description	Tools to Succeed - Policies & Options	Comments/Recommendations
<p>Labeling Consumer, environmental groups, and other are increasingly calling for mandatory labeling for biotechnology-derived products. The FDA announced new oversight procedures in May 2000 for biotechnology regulation, including voluntary labeling guidelines.</p>	<p>NASDA supports the principle that information relevant to the safety and healthfulness of foods should be widely disseminated. NASDA supports the policy of the Food and Drug Administration that foods produced through modern biotechnology should be labeled as such only if the foods differ from similar foods in ways that are significant and relevant to the issues of safety, efficacy, and purity. It is particularly important that labels convey useful and accurate information in a way that is not misleading to the consumer. Suggestions that biotech foods be labeled as such without regard to data demonstrating their substantial equivalence to other, unlabeled foods are unsupportable.</p>	
<p>Product Testing The May 2000 FDA initiative on biotechnology regulation supports an expanded science and research program for agricultural biotechnology. USDA is developing proposed rules to facilitate testing procedures and quality assurance with farmers and industry.</p>	<p>NASDA Policy 3.4 addresses biotech product testing</p>	
<p>Consumer Education Consumers and farmers need better information concerning biotechnology.</p>		
<p>Federal and State Cooperation</p>	<p>NASDA Policy states: “It is critical that federal and state officials be informed, knowledgeable, and included as working partners in all phases of the ongoing biotechnology regulatory policy process. It is essential that state agencies be active partners, sharing oversight responsibilities with federal agencies, while carrying out their responsibilities to the state's agricultural community and the consuming public at large.”</p>	

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Food Safety		
<p>The United States enjoys the safest food supply in the world, not by accident but rather due to the current laws and regulations protecting the health and safety of the American public. However, even a system that ensures the safest food supply can become outdated and inefficient if it does not keep pace with emerging threats and technological advances.</p> <p>Agriculture has an opportunity to further improve food safety productivity through technologies and enhance the farm-to-table food safety system. Producers can enhance marketing and competition by marketing foods as the safest, wholesome, abundant, and affordable. There is also a need for harmonization of food safety standards among trading partners.</p> <p>Constraints to these goals are consumer confidence and acceptance, food scares and disparagement of agricultural products, cold-chain limitations, potentially unsafe imported foods.</p>	<p>Some general policy options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased research on nutraceuticals and phytochemicals, • Review federal dietary supplements policy, • Increase education on dietary habits. 	
<p>Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) System</p> <p>The third and final phase of HACCP was completed in January 2000 when very small plants (10 employees or less) were required to implement HACCP and meet performance standards for Salmonella. All domestic meat and poultry establishments are now operating under HACCP.</p> <p>USDA/FSIS is now considering additional process control plans for certain activities not covered under HACCP.</p>	<p>NASDA Policy 4.1 and 4.2 addresses food regulation and “farm to table” food safety system.</p> <p>NASDA Policy 4.3 and 4.4 supports use of science and risk based HACCP system, including microbial testing, preharvest, harvest, wholesale and retail food safety.</p> <p>The President’s Council on Food Safety plans to issue comprehensive recommendations in July 2000, which include enhancement of the HACCP system. Policy options include additional work with President’s Council.</p>	

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Tracebacks and Recalls The current federal process discourages state efforts and effective federal/state communication is lacking.	NASDA Policy 4.4 addresses tracebacks and recalls. Policy options include: collaboration with CDC on data collection, identify preservation, recall and tracebacks.	
Single Food Agency The 1998 National Academy of Science (NAS) report “ <i>Ensuring Safe Food from Production to Consumption</i> ” calls for a unified and central federal framework to improve the food safety system. Other government reports and numerous bills have been introduced in Congress to create a single food agency.	NASDA has no specific policy regarding establishment of a single food agency.	
Meat and Poultry Inspection State food safety programs are important partners of the federal inspection system. Current law limits products receiving state inspection to distribution solely within such state, although the law requires state inspection programs to be “at least equal to” the federal program..	NASDA Policy 4.5 addresses State Food Inspection Programs. NASDA is supporting legislation introduced in the Senate (S.1988) to allow interstate shipment of meat and poultry.	
State Inspection Programs Federal/state programs conduct the vast majority of food safety work.	NASDA Policy 4.5 addresses State Food Inspection Programs, including amenability, state egg inspection and quality assurance, and dairy product safety.	
Egg Safety USDA and FDA have proposed an Egg Safety Action Plan as part of the President’s Council on Food Safety. The goals are to reduce foodborne illnesses related to Salmonella in eggs by 50 percent by 2005, and eliminate egg-associated SE illnesses by 2010. A final rule is expected to be published in 2001, with implementation in 2002 and 2003.	NASDA Policy 4.5 addresses state egg inspection and the National Egg Regulatory Officials (NERO) have submitted details comments on the Egg Safety Action Plan.	
Federal Preemption	NASDA Policy 4.5 opposes federal preemption of state food regulation.	

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New Technologies Irradiation	<p>NASDA Policy generally supports increased use of new technologies, but does not include specific policy on irradiation, cold pasteurization, enhanced packaging, indicator strips, etc.</p> <p>Food Regulation Committee Chairman Dan Wyant has proposed policy on food irradiation.</p> <p>Additional Policy option: promote safe food technologies.</p>	
Imported Food	<p>NASDA Policy 4.6 addresses Imported Food</p> <p>Policy options include: Multilateral Financial Institution funding for cold-chain infrastructure improvements.</p>	
Domestic Food Assistance	<p>NASDA Policy 5.1 through 5.5 addresses nutrition and food assistance, including child nutrition programs, school lunch, breakfast and milk programs, food stamp program, WIC program, WIC farmers market nutrition program, food distribution and emergency assistance programs, gleaning and food recovery.</p>	
Transportation	<p>NASDA Policy 4.7 deals with transportation.</p>	