



January 2, 2024

Dear Valued Customer,

Thank you for your inquiry regarding Ready-to-Eat (RTE) meat and poultry production at Tyson Foods, Inc. Let me assure you that we employ a rigorous environmental microbiological surveillance program termed the "Sentinel Site Program®". We began this program in 1999, well before the regulatory requirements of 9 CFR §430 were promulgated.

This program is designed as an on-going verification of the hazard analysis regarding the potential for post-processing contamination of RTE products with *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*). Specifically, it represents an on-going assessment of the HACCP plan and the conclusion that post-processing contamination of RTE products with *Lm* is not a hazard reasonably likely to occur. This conclusion is justified by the data previously collected which demonstrates that food contact surfaces are not harboring *Lm*. These data continue to be collected and analyzed to assess the on-going potential for this hazard to occur.

Data is collected through the Sentinel Site Program® on a weekly basis from food contact surfaces, non-food contact surfaces, as well as indirect-food contact surfaces. If and when a surface returns a positive test result for *Listeria spp.*, an investigation is conducted, and corrective actions are taken before the line is eligible to resume production. Once production has resumed, the surface is subject to intensified monitoring for *Listeria spp.* to confirm that a harborage does not exist. In the event that any surface on the production line returns a positive test result for *Listeria spp.* concurrent with this intensified monitoring, we immediately reassess the HACCP plan and incorporate a CCP for the control of *Listeria monocytogenes*. In the event that test results necessitate finished product testing for *Listeria monocytogenes*, a robust sampling plan is employed. This sampling plan is based upon ICMSF criteria for a severe hazard.

Finally, the Sentinel Site Program® also includes provisions for random sampling of finished products on a quarterly basis. These samples are collected as a verification of the effectiveness of the program. Since the implementation of this program, we have consistently demonstrated the ability to maintain our RTE processing areas in a manner that ensures the production of safe and trusted food products.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Rybolt', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Rybolt, Ph.D.
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