

## **Appendix G**

### **Selected Comments from Directors of State Inspection Programs**

#### *How State Inspection Affects Rural Areas:*

“By providing individual attention and guidance to small and very small business, the environment is conducive to the development and success of those processors. This provides a positive economic impact to local economies by additional jobs and market places for raw materials.... Also small business feeds small business. That is, small farmers supply small packers, who supply small jobbers, who supply small retailers, who supply small populations (communities).”

-James D. Meadows, Director of Regulatory Services, Mississippi Meat Inspection Division

“Having small processing plants strategically located in all areas of the state has a positive affect on the availability of quality fresh meat products to the small restaurants, schools, nursing homes, etc. which would otherwise have to purchase large quantities in order to obtain deliveries.”

-Dr. Bill Barnum, Director, Oklahoma Meat Inspection

“We provide inspection services to small establishments which FSIS does not want due to size and remote locations; most of them prefer state inspection due to our accessibility and flexibility in accommodating their schedules of operation; many would close if required to be Federally-inspected thus increasing unemployment and reducing state revenues.”

-Dr. David Cardin, Program Manager, Virginia Office of Meat and Poultry Services

“I do not believe FSIS wants to deal with very small, mom and pop plants that require more assistance to deal with such programs as HACCP systems.”

-Charles King, Director, South Carolina Meat and Poultry Inspection Department

#### *How State Inspection Affects Smaller Processors:*

“We offer regulation and guidance of the medium, small, and very small plants and state control of a regulatory process that, in Federal hands, often overcomes small business.”

-Michael Mammaing, Bureau Chief, Iowa Meat and Poultry Inspection Bureau

“State inspection program officials are more accessible to small plant owners and operators than are Federal inspection program officials. ... Often times, in a large Federal system, the small operator cannot easily access Federal officials because they are occupied with dealing with large plant problems. A state program provides an environment more conducive for new small businesses to start and grow into larger businesses. A state program also provides an environment in which small business can more readily survive and negotiate the regulatory waters because help is not very hard to get from a state program.”

-(name withheld by request)

“The biggest advantage of a state inspection system is the personal attention that can be given to the meat industry. Labels can be approved immediately, equipment and construction questions answered promptly and the ability to obtain immediate assistance in the daily problems that arise in the meat packing industry.”

-Dr. Bill Barnum, Director, Oklahoma Meat Inspection

“When there is a problem they [processors] know they can talk to the Program Director directly. They do not think this would happen if they needed to discuss a problem with someone in Washington.”

-Charles King, Director, South Carolina Meat and Poultry Inspection Department

*How State Inspection Affects Consumers:*

“We provide assistance to local/county health departments on meat safety issues in restaurants and retail markets, thereby improving the safety of meat in retail shops. Our custom-exempt plants are more strictly inspected than FSIS does Custom-Exempt plants. Our inspection is equal to or better than FSIS.... [On whether to initiate a state program:] DO IT. You will provide a service to the small plant owners that protects the public better than the FSIS can or will.”

-Dr. Paul Diederland, Director, Indiana Meat and Poultry Inspection

“The West Virginia consumers have definitely more confidence in state-inspected products, locally produced and inspected. No WV-inspected product has ever been subject to a recall.”

-Dr. Warren Charminski, Director, West Virginia Meat and Poultry Inspection Division

“[Consumers should have] equal confidence [in state-inspected products], products have same standards, monitored regularly. Actually our sampling data for pathogens in ready to eat products is considerably lower than USDA’s results.”

-Terry Burkhardt, Director of Wisconsin Bureau of Meat Safety and Inspection

“Food safety and food quality of State-inspected meat and poultry products is the same as for federally inspected products. However, without state inspection, it is more likely that more livestock would be illegally slaughtered without inspection and sold to the public by individuals that become disgruntled with dealing with perceived federal “red tape”, give up inspection, but try to make a living by continuing operations illegally.”

-(name withheld by request)

“Consumers should have more confidence [in state-inspected products] but I don’t feel they do.”

-Laurie Leis, Manager, Wyoming Consumer Health Services

*Opponents of State Inspection:*

“The primary objections come from Federal inspectors.”

-Dr. Russell Laslocky, Head of Vermont Meat Inspection Service

“National Consumer groups rarely have any good words for state programs.”

-Charles King, Director, South Carolina Meat and Poultry Inspection Department

“Main detractors [of state meat inspection] are the members of special interest groups who see more profit in less competition and the federal inspector’s union who want to hold all inspection jobs for their members.”

-Dr. Rex Holt, Georgia Director of Meat Inspection

*Advice to Those Considering A State Inspection Program:*

“Make sure there is adequate support at all levels: meat packers, farmers, businesses and legislature.”  
-Steven C. Wells, Director, North Carolina Meat and Poultry Inspection Service

“A state program should be developed only with industry support.”  
-Carol Olmstead, Montana Meat and Poultry Inspection Bureau Chief

“Discuss the situation with the industry and producers in Nebraska. Is there enough support to generate legislative action to allocate the funds?”  
-Terry Burkhardt, Director of Wisconsin Bureau of Meat Safety and Inspection

“Starting a state inspection program should only be pursued if interstate shipment is to become a reality.”  
-Michael Pierce, Technical Assistant, Kansas Meat and Poultry Inspection Division

“I would include a poultry part to the program. More small businesses are producing poultry products....”  
-Dr. Rex Holt, Georgia Director of Meat Inspection

“You protect the public and animal health, and must offer fair, consistent, and firm enforcement of the requirements. You must show your connection to your state industry and citizens by being a major player with academia, industry groups, economic development officials, and your legislature by providing guidance and opportunities as well as regulation.”  
-Michael M. Mamminga, Bureau Chief, Iowa Meat and Poultry Inspection Bureau

“Desirable changes would be increasing civil and criminal penalties for violations and bringing inspector salaries up to a level comparable to Federal inspectors.”  
-Dr. David Cardin, Program Manager, Virginia Office of meat and Poultry Services