



ABA News

Press Release from the American Bakers Association



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ABA Submits Comments to FDA and USDA on Important Issues for Bakers *Food Safety and Labeling Issues Addressed*

Washington, DC – The American Bakers Association (ABA) has recently filed comments with both the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on two separate issues that impact the baking industry.

Current Good Manufacturing Practices

On March 1, 2007, ABA filed comments regarding FDA's proposal to modernize the current good manufacturing practices (cGMP's). In November 2005, the FDA issued the "Food CGMP Modernization – A Focus on Food Safety" report. This report contained specific recommendations to revise the food CGMPs and recommended that the FDA seek comments for training programs and record keeping, allergen controls, fresh produce, written sanitation procedures for HACCP and the use of time-temperature relationships to control microbial growth.

"I'm happy with the feedback and assistance we received from ABA members in developing these cGMP comments," said Len Heflich, George Weston Bakeries and Chairman of ABA's FTRAC. "It is important to present FDA with comments that specifically reflect the baking industries' position and concerns with the GMP's."

Use of the Term "Natural"

Additionally, on March, 5th, 2007, ABA submitted comments to USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) on their proposal to establish a definition for the voluntary claim "natural." Although the definition would apply only to meat and poultry products regulated by USDA, ABA is interested in how such a definition may influence how the FDA interprets and applies the term natural to bakery products in the future. A portion of ABA members produce products, such as pot pies and pizzas, which are regulated by USDA.

"We feel it is important for ABA to officially weigh in and get on the record with USDA FSIS as they develop their policy on this issue, as their decision may very well impact the way FDA interprets and develops their definition of the term 'natural'," said Lee Sanders, ABA Senior Vice President, Government Relations and Public Affairs. "ABA also believes that the Agency needs to be mindful of consumer perceptions of what is 'natural' when drafting its definition."

Both sets of comments are available on ABA's website (www.americanbakers.org).

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