

THE NATIONAL
PROVISIONER

132 YEARS OF EDITORIAL LEADERSHIP IN THE MEAT & POULTRY INDUSTRY

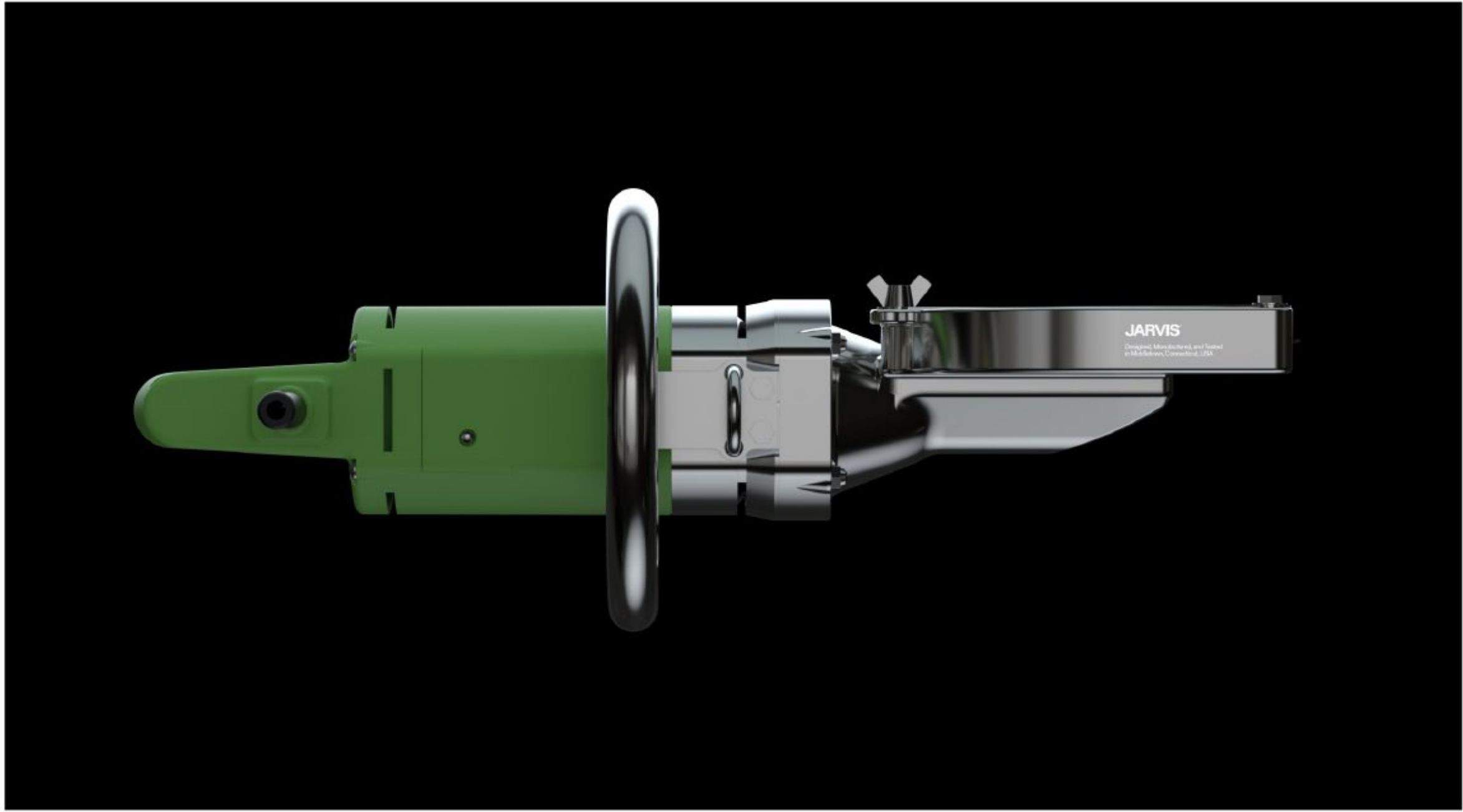
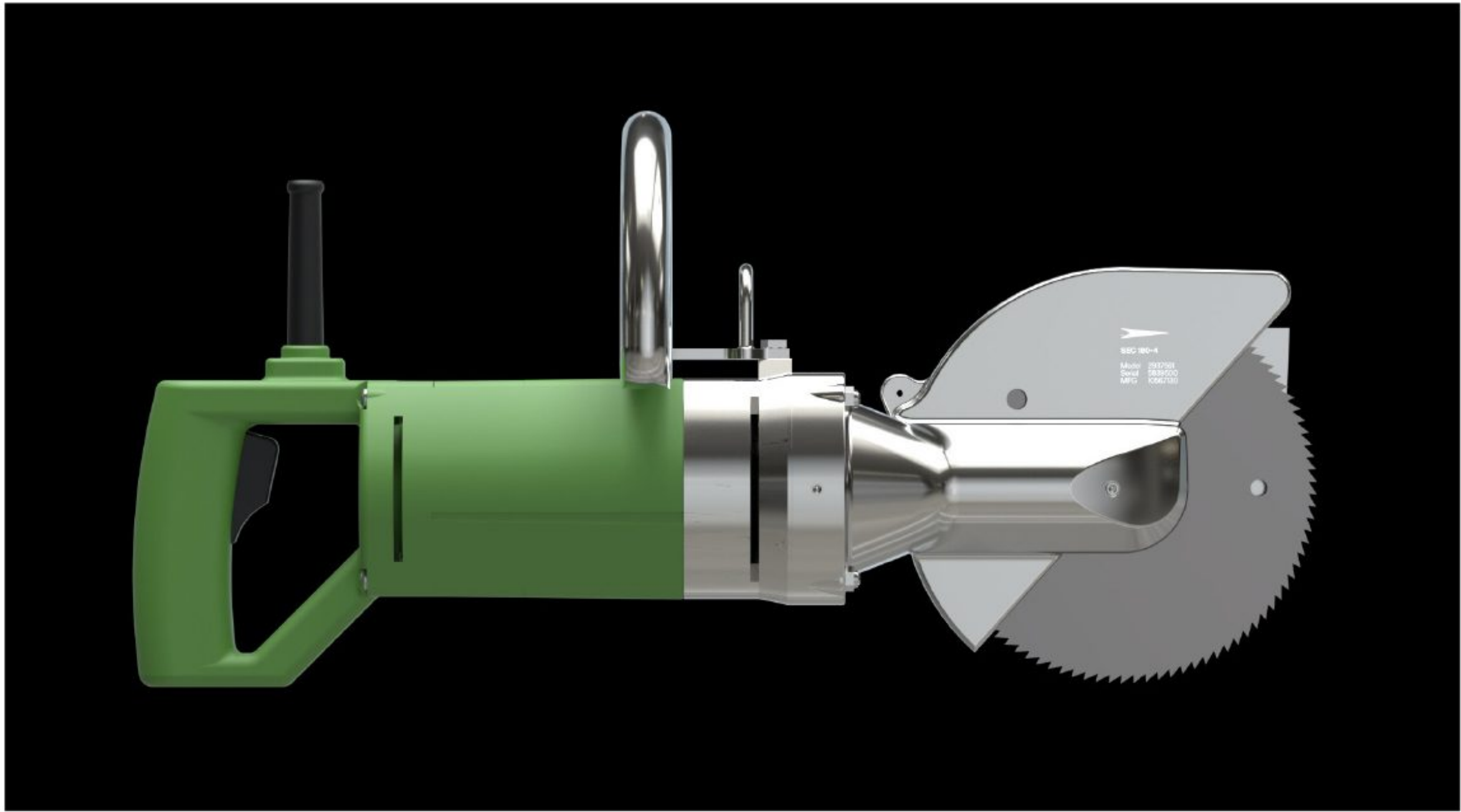
2024
SAUSAGE REPORT

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FACTORS IN THE HATCHERY CAN IMPACT BIRD HEALTH AND PROCESSING EFFICIENCY

Josh Deines, technical services device lead for Zoetis, discusses factors that can impact hatchability in the hatchery and ultimately, effect liveability and chick quality post hatch. Chick quality at hatch has implications for bird health throughout the growout period and will influence broiler uniformity at slaughter, which is an important factor for processing plants.

NEVER OBSOLETE

INSPECTION SYSTEMS

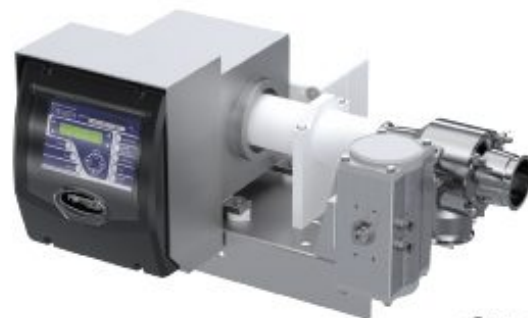
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- 2. Hard Rock Cafe launches five new globally inspired burgers
- 3. BUBBA responds to consumer demand with new SMASHED BUBBA burger
- 4. Hooters introduces frozen chicken wings at retail
- 5. Tyson launches new chicken offerings at retail



MOST-POPULAR FEATURES:

- 1. 2024 Top 100 Meat and Poultry Processors: Navigating High Prices and Consumer Shifts
- 2. Congrats! Meat Industry Hall of Fame welcomes latest inductees
- 3. Smithfield buys dry-sausage production plant from Cargill
- 4. 2022 Top 100 Meat and Poultry Processors
- 5. 2023 Top 100 Meat and Poultry Processors



MOST-RECENT PODCAST EPISODES:

- 1. Episode 175: 84.51° Insights Director breaks down meat consumer trends
- 2. Episode 174: Foodservice trends from Technomic
- 3. Episode 172: Grass-fed beef brand takes a deep dive into marketing for organic meats
- 4. Episode 171: Atlantic Fish Co. CEO discusses company's cultivated white fish fillets
- 5. Episode 170: Following up on The Power of Meat

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SAUSAGE STAYS HOT

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Burgers may be king of the American grill, but sausages deserve at least honorable mention for their role as a grilling mainstay.

Circana retail sales data finds dinner sausage sales were \$577 million in May 2024, unchanged from May 2023. Sales of breakfast sausage fared slightly better, with May 2024 sales of \$203 million, an increase of 2.8% from the same time a year ago.

While those sales stats are far from record-breaking, they compare favorably against the overall processed meat category's -0.6% sales decline for May 2024 compared to May 2023.

Check out Associate Editor Sammy Bredar's Sausage Report 2024 to find how the category keeps attracting consumer interest.



FRED WILKINSON

 EMAIL FRED WILKINSON



UP NEXT ➡
COVER STORY - SAUSAGE REPORT

MEAT INDUSTRY HALL OF FAME

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Congrats! Meat Industry Hall of Fame welcomes latest inductees

The Meat Industry Hall of Fame is proud to welcome its latest round of inductees and invites all meat and poultry industry stakeholders to congratulate its Class of 2023.

After nominations solicited from the industry and voting by past inductees of the Meat Industry Hall of Fame, please join us in honoring these seven newest members of the Meat Industry Hall of Fame:

- **Terry Caviness** – CEO, Caviness Beef Packers Ltd.
- **Oscar G. Mayer** (posthumous) – Chairman and President, Oscar Mayer
- **John A. Stadler** – Retired Meat Industry Executive
- **Kevin Western** – CEO, Western’s Smokehouse
- **Mindy Brashears** – Professor-food Microbiology and Food Safety, Texas Tech University
- **Tommy Wheeler** – Distinguished Senior Research Scientist, USDA-ARS
- **Phil Hinderaker** – Retired, President, Alkar

To celebrate the Meat Industry Hall of Fame’s Class of 2023, MIHOF will return to an annual in-person honors ceremony, with this year’s induction reception planned to take place on Aug. 2, 2024, during the AAMP American Convention of Meat Processors & Suppliers’ Exhibition in Omaha, Neb.

During the reception on Aug. 2, select inductees will discuss the industry’s innovations and share insights about the market trends and technical developments they see powering growth in the meat and poultry industry. (The reception is sponsored by Multivac, Diamond Sponsor; Reiser, Gold Sponsor; and ESI Group, Reception Open Bar Sponsor).

The National Provisioner invites all meat and poultry industry professionals to join us in commemorating these seven leaders with our industry’s highest honor and recognizing the meat and poultry industry as the leading sector of North American food production.

About Meat Industry Hall of Fame

The Meat Industry Hall of Fame was created in 2009 to enshrine the leaders and legends whose visions, skills and dedication have shaped and sustained the industry. Meat and poultry production have been a primary component of North American agricultural productivity and a bedrock of our food security and economic strength. The business of meat and poultry, from the nation’s farms and ranches to the world’s tables, has provided many of our communities with robust economic activity, millions of jobs, and a legacy of accomplishment and progress.

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PRODUCT VARIETY AND INNOVATION

PROPEL SAUSAGE
FORWARD AT RETAIL

HENRY AND CAROL KOLBUCH GROW THEIR FAMILY-OWNED AND -OPERATED BUSINESS THROUGH CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE, PRODUCT CONSISTENCY AND QUALITY, AS WELL AS PRODUCT AND FLAVOR VARIETY.

BY SAMMY BREDAR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Variety and innovation are propelling the sausage category forward. In our 2023 Sausage Report, we noted that consumers want it all: convenience, value and product innovation. Well into 2024, that trend does not seem to be slowing.

Anne-Marie Roerink, principal at 210 Analytics, noted that, due to inflationary pressures, processed meat costs have risen more than fresh meat prices. This has led to fresh meat outpacing processed protein at retail. “Over the past year, year-over-year dollar sales declined 2.3% and pound sales decreased by 3.7%,” Roerink said.

Still, sausage remains resilient. Despite high price points, Roerink noted, “All three forms of sausage were above-average performers on the processed meat side, with dinner sausage delivering pound growth.”



Photo courtesy of Anne-Marie Roerink

Out of the three sausage retail categories – dinner, frankfurters and breakfast sausage – dinner sausage was the only category to see any growth. To capitalize on the success of dinner sausage, Roerink said retailers are utilizing limited-time flavors and standout products to drive trips to the store.

“With the popularity of dinner sausage, in particular, retailers have an opportunity to integrate these items in barbecue/grill-ready recipes, deli-prepared offerings to offer an alternative to rotisserie and fried chicken, as part of ready-to-cook dishes in the deli, etc,” Roerink said.

Roerink noted that sausage is a popular product with consumers, meaning that sausage is a great place to explore flavor variety.

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Photos courtesy of Smithfield Foods Inc.

Within the dinner sausage category, pork is on top, sitting at \$2.6 billion per year and rising 1.1% in sales and 3.3% in volume. Despite the popularity of pork dinner sausage, Roerink noted that variety in protein type is helping drive growth. “Volume sales grew year-over-year for dinner sausage made using beef, chicken, turkey and veal,” she said.

Doug Baldwin, brand manager for Smithfield Foods, noted a similar trend for Smithfield sausage products. Baldwin said, “products offering multiple proteins, including dry sausage variety packs are strong in the category and continue to grow.”

The rising popularity of protein variety is evident in the breakfast sausage category. “While pork breakfast sausage is easily the biggest seller, with annual sales of \$1.9 billion, it is chicken breakfast sausage that is growing rapidly year-on-year, up 26.7% in dollars and 28.6% in pounds,” Roerink said.

Despite the continued strain on American consumers’ pocketbooks, Roerink said that volume has only gone down by 0.2% for breakfast sausage, indicating a deflationary environment. “Many items on the processed meat side are experiencing deflation, which is likely going to result in improved engagement over the next six months in terms of household penetration and purchases.”

Although processed meat has been lagging in both sales and volume, the future is looking bright for processed retail meats.

Baldwin noted that high prices are not deterring consumers from their sausage purchases. He said, “Long-term prices are up in most sausage categories, however, volume growth remains strong, especially with dry/cured sausage, as charcuterie boards and snacking occasions continue to draw consumers.”

In fact, dry sausage is Smithfield Foods’ most popular sausage product. While pepperoni and peppered salami are growing quickly, Genoa Salami and Prosciutto remain steadfast, Baldwin said. Smithfield is catering to fast-growing consumer trends with new pepperoni products from Carando and Margherita.

As the dry-sausage category quickly grows, Smithfield has decided to acquire a dry-sausage Cargill production plant in Nashville, Tenn.

Photos courtesy of Anne-Marie Roerink

“Our planned acquisition of Cargill’s Nashville facility will expand our production capacity, enhancing our ability to serve growing consumer demand for high-quality charcuterie, pizza toppings, deli and other dry sausage products,” Baldwin said. “The acquisition will complement Smithfield’s existing portfolio of dry sausage brands, including Margherita, Carando and Armour, by adding capacity for the foodservice segment.”

For producers looking to gain market share in the sausage category, Smithfield said that value-added sausage products, featuring claims such all-natural or reduced-sodium, perform well. In addition to value-added product, adding value to the packaging is another way to drive sausage sales. “Packaging that offers convenience, such as resealable packs are also becoming a necessity as many consumers engage in the category for snacking,” Baldwin said.

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FROM PREP TO PACK

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BY SAMMY BREDAR
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Success with customers and at local farmers' markets drove Henry and Carol to expand their business, leading Henry and Carol to establish a USDA-certified facility. Now, Uncle Henry's Gourmet Meats products are featured in over 30 local stores in Michigan. The Kolbuchs hope to keep that number growing.

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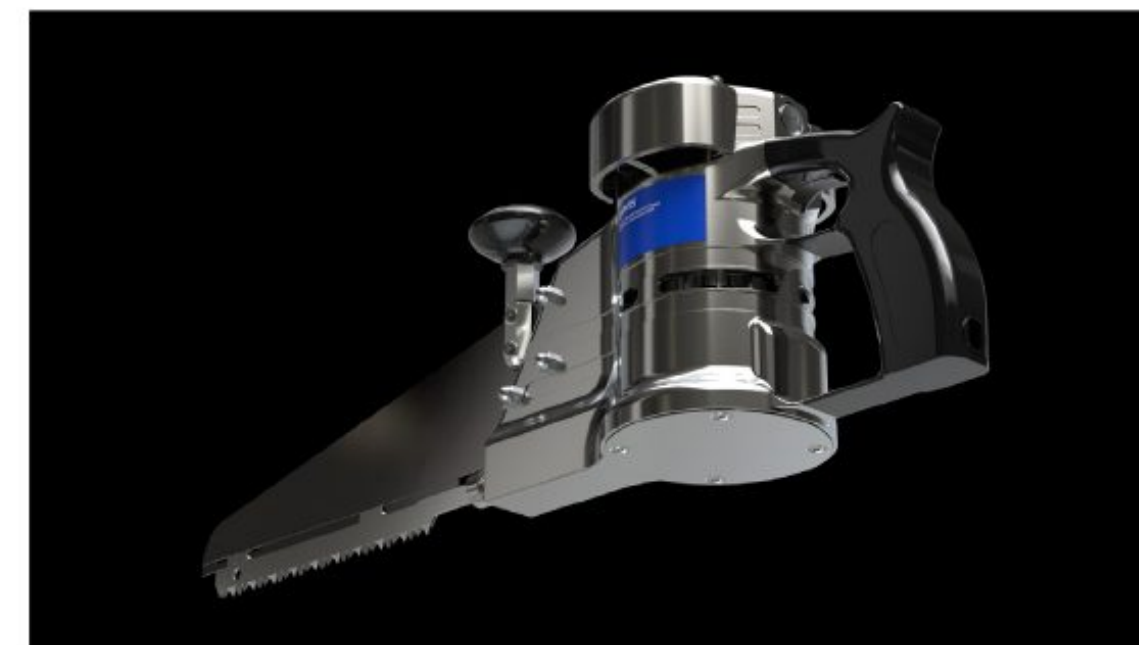
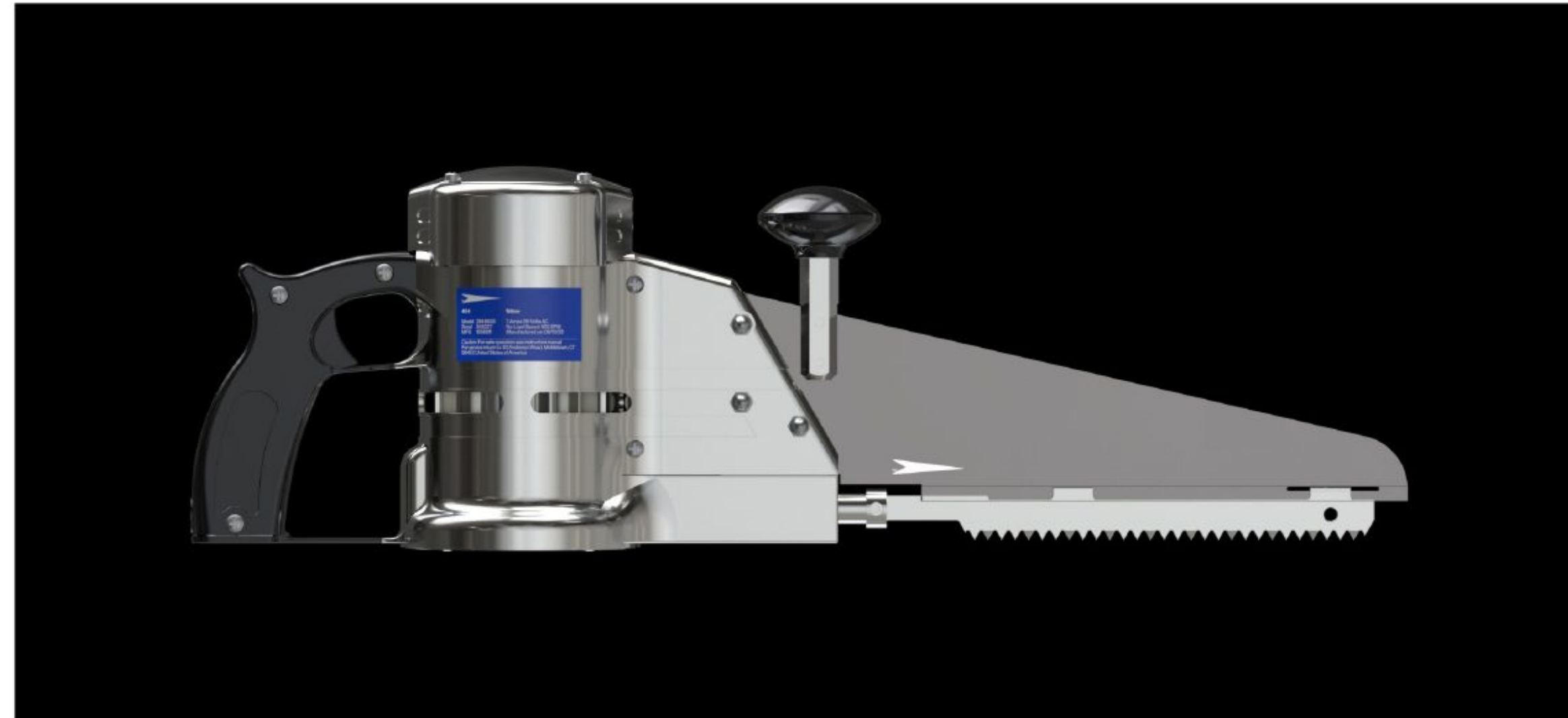
As Deer Camp Coffee and Roasting Co. continues to grow its storefronts, Uncle Henry's hopes to propel its sales growth. The family-owned business also hopes to reach new customers through an upcoming food truck venture, featuring Uncle Henry's venison hot dogs, venison polish, beef hot dogs and pulled pork sandwiches.

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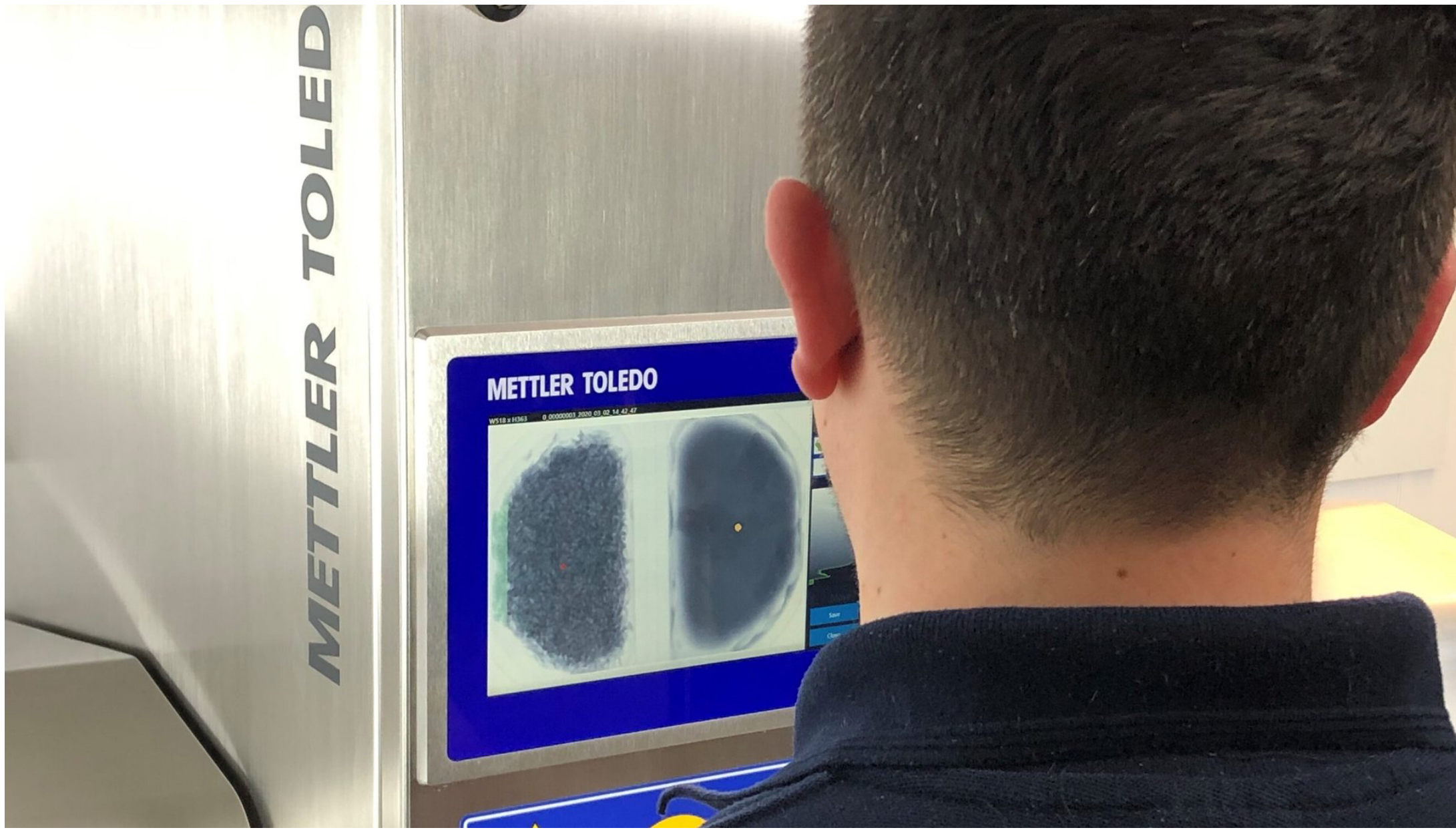
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COLD CHAIN

MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION INTERVENTIONS

THE OPERATIVE WORD IN COLD CHAIN IS 'COLD' – SO ADEQUATE TEMPERATURE CONTROL CAPACITY IS KEY.

BY FRED WILKINSON
CHIEF EDITOR

A key consideration for meat and poultry processors is designing and maintaining a storage and warehousing food safety system.

Meat and poultry processors and distributors shipping products should assess and implement measures that will ensure the sanitation and safety of products from initial shipment through delivery to other destinations.

The operative word in cold chain is “cold” – so adequate temperature control capacity is key.

Maintaining consistent optimal temperature of the product as it is coming out of production and moving into the temperature-controlled supply chain is essential.

“Ensuring that the product is at the right temperature before it gets into cold storage mitigates issues and ensures the integrity of the product during storage and downstream distribution,” said Ben Medearis, Americold vice president of business development-protein.

In some cases, he said, storage temperatures aren’t achieved until the product is received into the warehouse.

“In these cases, processes such as blast freezing or slow freezing are used to reach the optimal storage and distribution temperature zones,” Medearis said. “It is critical that clear and concise standard operating procedures are in place for maintaining product integrity and food safety requirements.”

Medearis added that it is important to ensure that workers handling the product understand proper handling and storage procedures, including temperature monitoring, sanitation compliance, documentation and traceability requirements.

Processors need to be aware of the overall condition of the cold storage facility storing the product to identify trouble spots that could negatively impact the cold chain integrity.

“This includes cleanliness, condition of the refrigeration system, redundancy of the refrigeration in case of condenser malfunction, and knowledge of the safety procedures to ensure product integrity in the case of a refrigeration leak (i.e. ammonia),” Medearis said. “It’s also a good idea to ask the cold storage facility to provide results of third-party audits such as SQF or BRC. Low audit scores are always a leading indicator of potential issues. It’s also helpful to have a clear understanding of what products are being stored in the same general area. Cross-contamination of various products can impact the integrity of certain products, especially if stored with allergens, such as eggs, dairy or peanuts”.

FOREIGN MATERIAL DETECTION

While keeping product properly chilled helps prevent microbial threats, the possibility of foreign materials contamination requires detection interventions for potential threats such as metal fragments.

“Metal detection is ideal when looking for very small metal contaminants in bulk or packaged products,” said Sarrina Crowley, marketing communications manager for Mettler Toledo. “Fresh meat and poultry can exhibit product effect, which can interfere with a metal detector’s capability of inspection. A metal detector would also be ideal in situations where very small slivers of aluminum could be present, as it is a very conductive yet non-dense metal.”

Because X-ray inspection operates by analyzing density variations, it is not affected by the conductivity of a product.

“X-ray systems can inspect for all types of metal as well as stone, glass, dense plastics and some bone,” Crowley said. “They can be used for pumped meat and poultry, and can also be placed at final packaging, where they can find any dense contaminants and also identify any defects/malformed product even inside closed packages.”

Vision inspection is important for proper labeling, to ensure the contents of labels is correct, that the label is present and not skewed, she said.

For processors looking to get the most benefit from their investment in inspection and detection equipment, Crowley suggests some questions to consider:

- Are the systems easy to use so that operators can learn quickly?
- Are there lockable/password-protected reject bins available?
- Are there options for upgrades versus buying brand new if needed?
- Does the supplier offer systems of all technologies and multiple inspections in one unit?
- If there is minimal space on the production line, does the supplier offer full service support including local field service and 24/7 telephone support?

Photo credit: Mettler Toledo

IS YOUR FOOD SAFETY PLAN UP TO DATE?



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Join *The National Provisioner* for an overview of food safety best practices that all meat and poultry processors need to make part of their operational routine. Food industry consultant and lawyer Joel Chappelle of Food Industry Counsel LLC will address the latest developments in food safety best practices and regulatory trends impacting the meat and poultry business.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Learn what new USDA regulations for Salmonella mean for poultry products – and other proteins.
- Key areas of focus when crafting an audit-ready food safety plan.
- How to foster a culture of safe food production and handling at your company.

SPEAKER

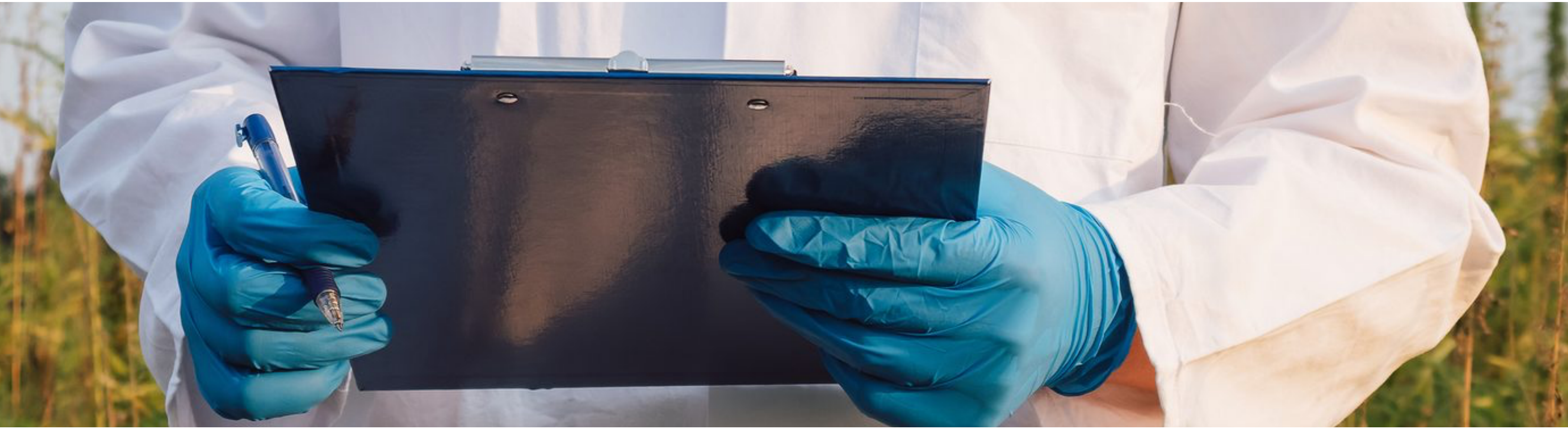


JOEL CHAPPELLE
Food Industry
Consultant and Lawyer
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JULY 16, 2024 AT 2 PM EDT

THE NATIONAL
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HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED BECOMING A USDA OR FDA INSPECTOR?

BY SHAWN K. STEVENS
FOOD INDUSTRY COUNSEL LLC

The roles of the USDA and FDA are critical in maintaining the safety and quality of the nation's food supply. These agencies ensure that all food products distributed into interstate commerce meet stringent, time-tested regulatory standards, protecting public health and fostering consumer confidence. Notably, food safety professionals, many of whom have accumulated years of specialized knowledge and skills, would be exceptionally well-suited to serve as USDA and FDA inspectors.

So, it then begs the question. However likely, or unlikely, in the event you were to decide to become a federal food safety inspector, what kind of inspector would you become? Would you be a kind and generous inspector? Or, a strict and firm inspector? Would you be known as Ms. Reverend Regulation, or Mr. Checklist Charlie? Well, let's find out.

REVEREND REGULATION

Reverend Regulation is the Knight Templar of the regulatory gospel. The good reverend can cite every applicable provision of the relevant Code of Federal Regulations chapter and verse. Even the most minor of deviations will be regarded as tantamount to the commission of a mortal sin. Indeed, no violation is too minor for the Reverend's righteous crusade. Beware CFR sinners, the Reverend will not hesitate to rain fire and brimstone down upon thy hairnet!

CHECKLIST CHARLIE

Rumor has it, Charlie was born with a clipboard attached to his wrist instead of a hand. That is not a copy of the L.A. White Pages; it's Charlie's checklist, a meticulously organized opus that makes "War and Peace" look like a comic book. Like a pilot performing a preflight check, every single entry is methodically and rigorously evaluated. Charlie doesn't just fill out checklists; he conducts them as if leading the New York Philharmonic. Charlie does not abide any instruments being out of tune.

CAPTAIN COMPLIANCE

Captain Compliance knows he is a superhero in the battle against food safety villains, even if you don't. Armed with the full authority of the US government, Captain Compliance enters the facility ready to do battle with anyone or anything that gets in his way. With a stern and unflinching gaze, he challenges everyone from reception to the C-Suite. For Captain Compliance, every inspection is an epic showdown between order and chaos and, by God, the Captain will emerge victorious, ensuring that every establishment in their jurisdiction meets the gold standard of food safety.

COLLABORATIVE CASEY

Casey prefers to maintain a collaborative approach without the heavy-handed antics some others prefer. With a laid-back approach, Casey prefers to focus on the bigger picture, offering advice rather than reprimands. Casey believes that fostering good relationships is key to compliance and that a stress-free environment encourages better practices in the long run. If there's a slightly frayed edge on a food label or a barely noticeable scuff on the floor, you can count on Casey to give a knowing nod, rather than a citation. For her, it's about guiding rather than enforcing, and creating a positive atmosphere where food safety feels more like a collaborative effort than a punitive exercise.

FRIENDLY FRANK

Frank is everyone's favorite inspector. Frank doesn't just point out deviations; he provides possible solutions. Inspections with Frank can feel like a casual chat with a guy who happens to know a lot about HACCP plans and GMPs. Frank starts conversations with, "How can we make this process even better?" rather than "What's wrong here?" This cooperative spirit transforms the inspection process into a two-way dialogue where everyone feels heard and valued. For Frank, the goal is a safer food supply achieved through cooperation and education, not fear and fines.

So, if that fateful day arrives, and you elect to change careers and put on the hat of a USDA or FDA inspector, what type of inspector would you be? And, how easy — or hard — would you be on yourself?

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Thank you to all who participated in the 2024 Food Safety Summit. This important gathering of the food safety community wouldn't be possible without the ongoing support of attendees, exhibitors, sponsors, speakers, staff, the Educational Advisory Board, and countless others who contribute their time and passion to connecting food safety and quality professionals with information and resources to ensure the safety of the food we all enjoy!

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Our SourceBook is the meat processing industry exclusive directory and guide to suppliers of equipment and materials for the meat, poultry and seafood marketplace. It includes resources for conveyors, mixers, processing and packaging systems as well as information on consultants. *The National Provisioner* Sourcebook is designed to provide you with sources for these important products & resources. Below is a sampling of some of the companies featured in this year’s directory. We invite you to reference the supplier logos below and click on them to learn more about each company’s offerings. Plus, be sure to visit (and bookmark!) our easy-to-use online directory here. link to www.provisioneronline.com/sourcebook

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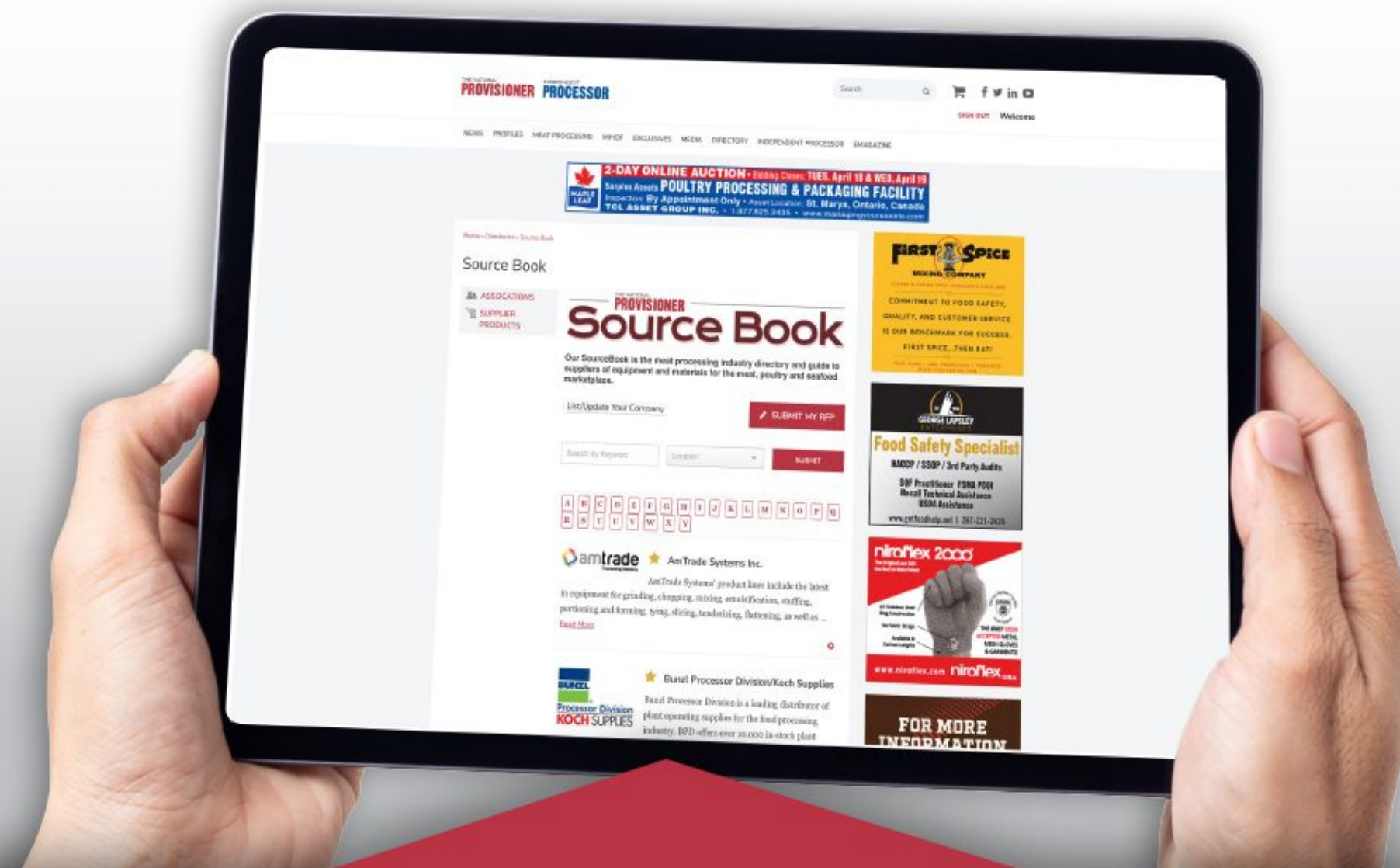


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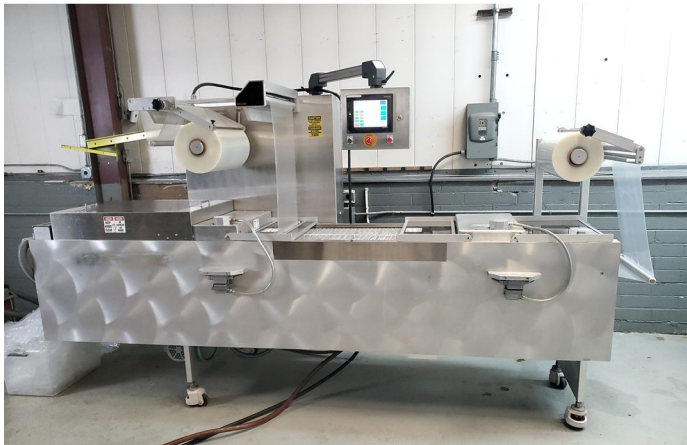
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Serial# 112500001
Cycles when bought: 2280
Current Cycles: 2651

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