



Solution for new FDA recordkeeping and traceback regulation

FDA tightens anti-bioterrorism measures

10/3/2005- **A final ruling that requires all manufacturers to register with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is designed to ensure that the country's food supply remains safe from possible attack.**

The regulation, which was first introduced in 2003, was finalized last week by the US departments of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services, and is one of five regulations issued by the agency to implement the Bioterrorism Act.

"This rule is one of our critical tools for safeguarding the American food supply," said acting FDA commissioner Andrew C. von Eschenbach.

"By finalizing this rule, we now have another important safeguard in our ongoing efforts to make sure that human and animal foods are protected from a deliberate or accidental act of contamination."

The new law will allow the FDA to quickly locate food processors in the event of deliberate or accidental contamination of the food supply. Except for specific exemptions, the registration requirements apply to all **facilities that manufacture, process, pack, or hold food, including animal feed**, dietary supplements, infant formula, beverages and food additives.

Other rules issued under the authority of the Bioterrorism Act of 2002 include the **requirement** of food firms **to keep records** that would allow FDA to conduct an effective and efficient investigation to protect the US human food and animal feed supply.

The agency says that the speed at which these **"one-step forward, one-step back" records** can be accessed in case of potential food contamination is critical in diminishing the impact on consumers. **If companies are unable to trace and isolate the source of a possible food contamination problem within 24 to 48 hours, the potential of serious damage increases exponentially.**

There is of course a great deal of current concern over food safety. Numerous product recalls are made every month, usually because of undeclared ingredients or possible contamination. However, the specter of bioterrorism has undoubtedly raised the stakes, forcing the FDA to ensure that it has a watertight safety net in place.

The FDA is confident however that the five regulations that make up the Bioterrorism Act will ensure the safety of the US food supply, and also protect the food industry from possible attack.

"Together, these regulations increase the safety and security of the US food supply and better protect Americans from a deliberate act of contamination of the food supply," said the agency.