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Statement of the American Meat Institute on Interim Final Rule Designed to Reduce *Listeria monocytogenes* in Ready-to-Eat Meat and Poultry Products

June 05, 2003

(Attribute Statement to AMI President J. Patrick Boyle)

USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) deserves credit for generally using a risk-based approach to develop a new regulation aimed at enhancing the safety of ready-to-eat meat and poultry products.

Clearly, FSIS recognizes that all ready-to-eat meat and poultry products are not the same either in the way they are processed or in the risk they may pose to the consumer population that is at higher risk for contracting listeriosis.

We are encouraged that *Listeria monocytogenes* (L.m.) incidence on ready-to-eat meat and poultry products has trended downward for more than a decade. We hope that this regulatory approach, coupled with the scientific strategies employed by meat and poultry companies, will help us achieve our mutual goal: producing ready-to-eat meat and poultry products that consumers can enjoy with confidence.

For more information contact:

Janet Riley
Senior VP, Public Affairs
703-841-3635
jriley@meatami.com

Dan Murphy
Vice President, Public Affairs
703-841-3624
dmurphy@meatami.com

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