A SURVEY ON THE MEAT PROCESSING SECTOR IN SELECTED REGIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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INTRODUCTION

The total population of the Philippines was estimated to about 103.3M with an annual growth rate of almost 2% (PSA, 2015). Population growth constantly increases the level of individual consumption and one of the challenges to be faced is food sustainability. Meat and meat products constitute to about 7.6% of the total foods consumed by the Filipinos (DOST-FNRI, 2013). In 2017 it was reported that a middle class Filipino family consumes around 4.4% to 5.0% of the total family expenditure on meat/meat products. To respond to the increased consumption of meat products and ensure food sustainability, the development of mechanical deboning of meat was introduced to increase the yield of meat from a carcass. Mechanically deboned meat or MDM can be obtained from pork, beef and poultry. In the Philippine meat processing industry, the use of mechanically deboned meat has increased rapidly beginning 1998 to the present. A substitute for protein content, good technological properties and relatively low price make these product useful raw materials for the manufacturer of processed meat. As to our knowledge, there is no existing data on the identification of meat processors who uses mechanically deboned meat. The hygienic handling of Mechanically Deboned Meat from any food animal as raw materials for processing of meat and meat products must be observed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This survey included micro to medium scale meat processing establishments. Businesses in the Philippines can be defined according to the size of assets, size of equity capital, and number of employees. Based on the Republic Act 9178 or the Barangay Micro Business Enterprise (BMBE) Act of 2002, these are the following categories:

- MICRO
  - ASSETS: 3 MILLION OR LESS
  - 9 EMPLOYEES OR LESS
- SMALL
  - ASSETS: 3 - 15 MILLION
  - 10 - 99 EMPLOYEES
- MEDIUM
  - ASSETS: 15 - 100 MILLION
  - 100 - 199 EMPLOYEES
- LARGE
  - ASSETS: 100 MILLION AND ABOVE
  - 200 EMPLOYEES AND UP

This market study assessed the products of Mechanically Deboned Meat (MDM) dominating the market; storage practices, distribution points and mode of transportation practiced by identified micro, small and medium scale meat processing establishments.
Meat processors continue to choose mechanically deboned meat in processed meats due to its affordability. However, food safety practices in transportation, handling and storage conditions should be strictly implemented to ensure safety and quality parameters for use of customers. The study recommends further investigation on the following interventions:

- Regular inspection of meat processing plants.
- Stricter policies with regards to issuance of sanitary permits in compliance with existing laws in food safety and sanitation.
- Sanitary permits should be issued to meat processors upon compliance with food safety and sanitary standards.
- Stronger ties and partnership between LGUs and food safety agencies in monitoring food safety abidance of meat processors especially with regards to vehicles and distribution points.

The major distribution point is the wet market (82.5%) and the common mode of transportation used was reefer vans with travel duration of 2 to 4 hours. However, more than half of meat processors used vehicles without temperature controlling devices such as tricycle, jeepney, closed van, bus (56.7%) and a number of these vehicles transport MDM products for more than four hours (4.9%).