



Bulletin

Serving the Baking Industry Since 1897

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ABA Chairman Deese Visits with 14 Key Policymakers in Washington – Attends Presidential Dinner



*Chairman Deese shaking hands
with Senator Bill Frist (R-TN),
Chairman, National Republican
Senatorial Committee.*

ABA Chairman George Deese, Flowers Foods, Inc., conducted a whirlwind visit to Capitol Hill to promote the agenda of the wholesale baking industry in Washington. During his two days, he and ABA staff met with over a dozen key members of Congress and their staffs to address the key issues of food security, allergen labeling, tax equity for bakery distributors and ergonomics. In addition, he and ABA President and CEO Paul Abenante met with key White House staff to encourage the President to promote the USDA/HHS Dietary Guidelines and the Food Guide Pyramid. They pushed the benefits of eating grain-based foods as the foundation of a healthy diet as a part of a new initiative on nutrition and exercise recently unveiled. Mr. Deese also attended the gala fundraising dinner, known as the “President’s Dinner,” to raise money for Republican Senate and House candidates.


“We had a number of productive visits with key Senate and House members to advance the baking industry’s issues of concern,” said Mr. Deese. “It was also a tremendous opportunity to demonstrate ABA’s commitment to electing pro-business Republicans to Congress by attending the President’s Dinner and delivering PEC contributions to the Senate and House election campaign committees.”

Mr. Deese and the ABA staff discussed the industry’s concerns regarding allergen labeling legislation, as well as future opportunities to weigh in on the registration and records maintenance/



*Chairman Deese and ABA President
Paul Abenante meeting with Rep.
Saxby Chambliss (R-GA).*

access rulemaking process and how to implement the new food security provisions of the recently enacted Bioterrorism legislation. Mr. Deese also worked to build bi-partisan support for legislation to grant tax equity for independent distributors of bakery products – a longterm goal of ABA. He also discussed with a number of lawmakers the rising cost of health care coverage for employees.

“It was so evident after visiting with lawmakers and their staffs that there is enormous respect for ABA and the ABA team,” said Mr. Deese. “I now have an even greater appreciation for the ABA team’s hard work, as well as the need for every ABA member to actively participate in assisting the industry’s efforts to attain our goals.” 



*Chairman Deese meeting with
Congressman Roy Blunt (R-MO).*

OSHA Assistant Secretary Henshaw Urges Industry to Renew Efforts on Ergonomics



Asst. Sec. Henshaw (left) briefing the Committee on OSHA priorities. Committee Chairman Steve Nixon listens intently.


Speaking to a group of over 25 baking industry representatives, Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA), John Henshaw challenged the ABA Safety Committee and the wholesale baking industry to renew its successful efforts to reduce the incidence and severity of ergonomic complaints. He asked the group to develop new ideas and initiatives to tackle these issues and to spread the news to the entire industry.

“We welcome the challenge, particularly coming from such an authority on safety and health as John Henshaw, to continue to improve the safety of our workforce,” said ABA Safety Committee Chairman Steve Nixon, Sara Lee Bakery Group. “As a result, we began the process of looking at the recommendations contained in the highly successful “Ergonomics in the Baking Industry” published over ten years ago. We also had a tremendous sharing of concepts and concrete solutions.”

Secretary Henshaw outlined for the Committee the Administration’s comprehensive plan to address ergonomics. He also talked about his priorities for changing the culture at OSHA to one of assisting those in need of information, as well as focusing on promoting safety and health instead of just on “writing tickets.” The Committee raised the ongoing issue of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists standard on flour dust. He indicated a willingness to work with the baking industry and with lawmakers to resolve the issue.

The Committee began the process of revising the old “Ergonomics” publication in a session facilitated by Steven Davis, Global Risk Management, Inc. The wide ranging discussion called for examining industry guidance and best practices to assist wholesale bakers in putting a comprehensive plan in place. The group identified several areas requiring additional information, as well as the various means of adding new materials and the proper methods of transmitting the information. It is anticipated that the project will take approximately six months to complete, however, the information will be updated as new developments occur.

The Committee also decided to further explore opportunities to partner with the American Institute of Baking to apply for OSHA grant funds to address safety issues surrounding the distribution sector of the industry. The Committee will meet with OSHA grant representatives at its October 29-30 meeting in Chicago. That meeting will include visits to the National Safety Council and the OSHA Training Institute.


“What an honor it was to have the OSHA Secretary come and speak to our group. We had an outstanding exchange with him and we look forward to a long-term beneficial relationship,” said Mr. Nixon. “It is a tribute to the ABA that he took time out of his busy schedule to be with us.” 



Steve Davis, Global Risk Management, engaging George Thompson, G.W. Bakeries, in discussion while Joe Xavier, NE Foods, looks on.

IMPORTANT - Refrigerant Deadline July 15

The companies who chose to participate in the EPA Bakery Partnership Agreement Program for the use of certain refrigerants should send a letter and signed Administrative Order of Consent (AOC) to the EPA by July 15, 2002. A model letter and an AOC were emailed to participants. The AOC commits the company to deadlines in July 2003 and 2004. Those companies who can

finish the program now received a model letter and a Consent Agreement and Final Order. The models are also available on the ABA web site along with extensive background information on the regulations and technical information on refrigerant alternatives. Questions about the program should be directed to Dr. Anne Giesecke at ABA, agiesecke@americanbakers.org. 

ABA Fleet and Distribution Committee Focuses on Customer Service - Vehicle Supplier Discussions Also Highlight Agenda



Members of the Fleet Committee in front of the Supervalu facility in Xenia, Ohio.




Greg Keyser, Thieman Tailgates, discussing baking industry needs with the Committee.

The ABA Fleet and Distribution Committee spent a highly productive afternoon meeting with distribution and transportation specialists at the Supervalu distribution center in Xenia, Ohio. During the visit, Committee members discussed Supervalu's electronic data exchange initiative and its impact on wholesale bakers. The Committee also discussed other key issues such as load optimization, centralized inventory control and ordering, and preventive maintenance scheduling.

Another key component of the June Committee meeting was the tour and discussion of industry vehicle suppliers Workhorse Custom Chassis and Union City Body Company. The Committee was able to see how these vehicles are manufactured and more importantly, the Committee was able to conduct a candid discussion with a number of Workhorse and UCBC executives on vehicle design issues, durability and parts supply. Additionally, Workhorse and UCBC hosted a dinner for the group.

"This was an extremely valuable opportunity to exchange ideas with a major baking industry customer, as well as with a key supplier to the industry," said Committee Chairman Paul Eiden, Sara Lee Bakery Group. "We also greatly appreciate the hospitality and openness shown by our hosts at Workhorse and UCBC. They were extraordinarily gracious with their time and information."

The other key part of the Committee meeting was a thorough examination of new product offerings by lift-gate manufacturers Maxon, Thieman and Lehman. All three companies provided a wealth of information on how to ease loading and unloading of industry vehicles. They also discussed possible modifications that might further benefit the wholesale baking industry. Additionally, the Committee discussed plans for the June 26 Tray Exchange meeting in Chicago (see story below.)


The next Fleet and Distribution Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for Nov. 6-8, 2002 in Chattanooga, Tennessee. On tap are a possible joint meeting with McKee Foods transportation executives and a visit to leading distribution company—U.S. Express. For more information on the November meeting, please contact Robb MacKie. 

Over 20 Bakers Meet to Address Tray Loss Issues

On June 26, the ABA organized a meeting of Chicago baking companies and those with significant business in Chicago to discuss the sizable increase in tray loss. Over 20 bakers participated in an open and frank exchange of information surrounding the loss of bakery trays and dollies. The group agreed that any resolution will require a multi-pronged strategy involving education of sales representatives, customers and law enforcement. In addition, the group agreed that the free flow of information is critical to reducing tray loss and setting up a rapid response network of contacts would help facilitate

this process.

"This was an enormously valuable kick-off meeting to start finding solutions to the serious tray loss problem," said ABA Vice President Government Relations Robb MacKie. "Going forward, the group will put in place a number of strategies to reduce tray loss. The plan would then be to extend those strategies to other parts of the country where similar problems exist. The industry can ill afford the multi-million dollars in losses every year."

The group will meet again in Chicago on September 19 to assess the progress of its efforts. 



Workhorse Custom Chassis plant manager explaining the truck manufacturing process to Committee members.


New Information on the ABA Web Site

A special section on Food Security has been added to the ABA web site. This section lists and describes many industry and government documents and sources of information that will be useful to individuals in companies who are either wholly or partially responsible for food security and facility security.

Another special section has been created for information about certain refrigerants and the EPA Bakery Partnership Agreement Program. Technical information is presented and more will be added as the baking industry gains experience with new refrigerants. Legal information on the Agreement and rule is also available. This section includes the useful and timely EPA documents, including brief descriptions of each that pertain to the refrigerant rule and the directions and web links you will need to access these documents. These new features can be found by going to the "In the News" and "Energy and Environmental Health Committee" sections of the ABA web site.

The mainstay of the Energy and Environmental Health Committee is the monthly mailing, which is also posted on the web site. The topics vary from month to month, depending on the relevancy and timeliness of the issues. For ex-

ample, in March, Environmental Management Systems were featured, and in May, sanitation information about mold, microbes and allergens was presented. Subjects include policy, planning and technical information. Air, water and enforcement are regular topics. Worker safety issues such as confined space and indoor air quality, and transportation issues concerning underground storage tanks, fuels, engine requirements, and vehicle testing programs are presented. Trends are evaluated such as "green taxes" for the UK and New York. Issues in Canada and Mexico are detailed as well.

The mailing appears around the first of the month and an e-mail is sent to the members of the Energy and Environmental Health Committee in a form that makes it easy for corporate staff to forward the information to plant environmental health and safety people. You can find the Energy & Environmental Health Committee monthly mailing by following these simple directions: 1. *Go to our web site, www.americanbakers.org.* 2. *Click on 'Publications & Services.'* 3. *Click on 'Environmental Monthly Mailing.'* 4. *A screen will come up which prompts you to type in our username and password (Username: *abaweb* / Password: *since1897*).* 

Important 2002 Meeting Dates

September 23-25

*Executive Leadership Development Committee
Washington, DC*

September 26

*FTRAC Meeting
Washington, DC*

October 9-10

*ABA/ATBI Board of Directors Meetings
Greensboro, North Carolina*

October 29-30

*Safety Committee Meeting
Chicago, IL*

November 6-8

*Fleet & Distribution Committee Meeting
Chattanooga, TN*

Reminder Re: Membership Dues

Membership dues invoices are due as of July 1. Please submit payment if you have not done so already. As always, ABA appreciates your support and participation.

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