

MANAGE YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN

The APICS definition of supply chain management is: "The design, planning, execution, control, and monitoring of supply chain activities with the objective of creating net value, building a competitive infrastructure, leveraging worldwide logistics, synchronizing supply with demand, and measuring performance globally."

The term has taken on an ominous tone as a multitude of pet food products have been removed from retail shelves across North America in response to the discovery of contaminants in wheat and rice gluten purchased from China. Private branding made the list long and the recall complex for consumers.

As a Kansan through and through, my first question was "why are we importing wheat gluten from China, and even more, why are we importing it for use in Kansas?" My home town is the self-proclaimed Wheat Capitol of the World. American agriculture as a whole has been exporting high quality wheat and wheat byproducts for decades.

Yet somewhere along the pet food supply chain, most likely to reduce costs, the decision was made to utilize offshore ingredients. Wheat products certainly appear to meet the very definition of commodity, yet with the

benefit of hindsight we recognize significant distinctions far beyond price.

While China is the easy scapegoat, we know little more than that something went wrong in the management of that supply chain. The search is on to determine if it was a single decision within one company that harmed many or multiple decisions by several organizations within the supply chain. Our short attention spans will likely move on to the next set of headlines before the results of the pet food supply chain analysis are made public.

"Wise men learn from the mistakes of others."

MANUFACTURING CZAR NUMBER TWO

In 2003 Albert Frink, Jr. became President Bush's first manufacturing czar (official title: assistant Commerce secretary for manufacturing and services). He stepped down from that post in January 2007. The 1st week of May saw Woody Sutton, a former US Navy Rear Admiral, nominated as the second manufacturing czar. The National Association of Manufacturers applauds the selection. Confirmation is expected.

Anybody know the metrics used to evaluate the impact of either?