

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS DIRECTIVE	9500.5	8/13/09
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**LABORATORY SAMPLING PROGRAM FOR IMPORTED
MEAT AND POULTRY PRODUCTS**

CHAPTER I

I. PURPOSE

This directive is addressed to import inspection personnel. It provides instructions on the laboratory sampling of imported meat and poultry products.

Key Points Covered

- *How import inspection personnel are to collect, prepare, and submit samples for laboratory analyses*
- *How import inspection personnel are to interpret laboratory results and take appropriate action*

II. CANCELLATION

FSIS Directive 9770.2, Submission of Import Samples for Residue Analysis, dated 6/5/91

III. RESERVED

IV. REFERENCES

9 CFR Parts 327 and 381

FSIS Directive 7355.1, Use of Sample Seals for Laboratory Samples and Other Applications

FSIS Directive 10,210.1, Unified Sample Form

FSIS Directive 10,230.2, Procedures for Collecting and Submitting Domestic Samples for Microbiological Analyses

FSIS Directive 10, 230.6, Submitting Tissue Specimens for Pathological or Diagnostic Microbiological Evaluation to the Laboratory

FSIS Directive 9020.1, Meat, Poultry, Egg Products and Shell Eggs Refused Entry into the United States (U.S.)

V. BACKGROUND

The Automated Import Information System (AIIS) is programmed to assign laboratory types of inspections (TOI) for imported meat and poultry products. When a lot is presented for import reinspection, import inspection personnel are to enter the data into the AIIS. In some instances the AIIS may assign one or more TOIs. Upon reviewing the assignment, import inspection personnel, may refer to the meat and poultry regulations and FSIS Food Standards and Labeling Policy Book if questions arise concerning the assigning of any specific laboratory analysis to the presented product. If a TOI is assigned for a lot that is not applicable to the product, import inspection personnel are not to perform it but exempt it in the AIIS.

NOTE: Import inspection personnel are to refer to the following FSIS Directives for the sampling of imported products not included in this directive;

- For abnormal containers see FSIS Directive 7530.1, Handling a Process Deviation or Abnormal Container of Thermally Processed, Commercially Sterile Canned Product
- For Not Ready To Eat (NRTE) *E. coli* O157:H7 sampling see FSIS Directive 10,010.1, Microbiological Testing Program and Other Verification Activities For *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 In Raw Ground Beef Products And Raw Ground Beef Components And Beef Patty Components.

VI. REINSPECTION ASSIGNMENTS

A. Automated Import Information System (AIIS) is the computer program that generates import reinspection assignments. More than one type of reinspection may be assigned to an imported lot. The AIIS also receives and stores daily reinspection results from U.S. ports-of-entry and compiles histories for every country that exports meat or poultry products to the United States.

B. Type of Inspection (TOI) is the specific AIIS reinspection assignment for a lot of imported meat or poultry product.

C. Level of Reinspection is the frequency of reinspection assignments based upon the compliance history of a foreign establishment and country for a specific TOI and product. There are three levels of reinspection.

1. **Normal** is a level of reinspection where randomly selected lots are assigned a TOI based on the AIIS annual sampling plan. Under the normal level of sampling, FSIS does not retain a lot of imported meat or poultry product pending receipt of a laboratory analysis.

2. **Increased** is a level of reinspection above the normal level that is directed by a management decision. Under the increased level of sampling, a lot of imported meat or poultry product may or may not be retained by FSIS pending receipt of a laboratory

analysis. Retention of lots on increased reinspection will be determined by a management decision. Import inspection personnel are to verify the increased country and establishment list which can be found in Outlook Public Folders (Public Folders/All Public Folders/OIA/IID/Import Folder) in order to confirm any special sampling procedures.

3. **Intensified** is a level of reinspection that is implemented automatically by the AIIS when a TOI is reported as a failure. Under intensified reinspection, lots are placed on mandatory FSIS hold pending results of the TOI that was conducted at the intensified level.

D. Voluntary Hold is an option available to importers or their designee (e.g., import establishment, broker) whenever a lot is sampled for any laboratory analysis. Under voluntary hold, the lot would be held at the official import inspection establishment where it was reinspected pending completion of the lab analysis. Lots on voluntary hold may not be prestamped with the mark of import inspection.

E. Laboratory TOI Exemptions

1. Import inspection personnel are authorized to exempt a laboratory sample assigned by the AIIS to lots under normal or increased – lot not held level of reinspection when it is determined that the TOI is not applicable to the product being reinspected.

2. Import inspection personnel are not authorized to exempt a laboratory sample assigned by the AIIS to lots under an increased – lot held intensified level of reinspection unless the TOI is not applicable to the product being reinspected, and the Regional Import Field Office (RIFO) concurs with the reason for the exemption.

VII. SAMPLING

A. Selecting Samples

1. When the AIIS assigns a laboratory TOI, import inspection personnel are to:

a. mark each shipping container from which a sample is taken with the "USDA OFFICIAL IMPORT SAMPLE" stamp;

b. observe import establishment personnel's use of a knife, saw, or other tool when aseptic removal of tissue is required to acquire a sample; and

c. return remaining product to the lot after sample removal.

2. When import inspection personnel suspect that a lot may have been under-processed, is adulterated, or otherwise fails to comply with applicable standards, they are to:

a. notify the RIFO to obtain concurrence to hold the lot and sample the product; and

b. if approved, add laboratory sampling to the AIIIS lot assignment as an unscheduled TOI.

3. Import inspection personnel are to refer to FSIS Directive 9500.1, Automated Import Information System (AIIIS) Contingency Plan, in the event the AIIIS is unavailable.

B. Sample Receipt

Import inspection personnel are to complete an FSIS Form 9770-1, "*Official Receipt for Samples of Foreign Products Collected for Laboratory Analysis*," for each foreign health certificate for product from which a laboratory sample is taken. One form may represent several lots presented for reinspection under one health certificate.

C. Sample Submission to Laboratories

1. Samples are to be submitted to an FSIS field service laboratory for analysis or, if requested by the importer, to an FSIS accredited laboratory that is approved to test for the assigned analysis. When submitting samples to an accredited laboratory, import inspection personnel are to verify laboratory accreditation to conduct the required analysis. When an accredited laboratory is used, import inspection personnel are to note on the sample form that the results are to be faxed to the Eastern Laboratory and to the applicable RIFO.

2. Import inspection personnel are to refer to FSIS Directive 7355.1 for guidance on sealing shipping containers.

3. Import inspection personnel are to mail samples using the FSIS contract overnight delivery or courier service.

4. Samples collected before Federal Express pickup Monday through Friday should be held refrigerated until shipped that same day.

5. Samples collected after Federal Express pickup Monday through Thursday should be held refrigerated overnight and shipped the next day.

6. Samples collected during the weekend (after Federal Express pickup Friday through Sunday night) should be frozen and shipped on Monday. Note: If Monday is a holiday that Federal Express does not pick up samples, they may be held frozen until shipping on Tuesday.

7. Import inspection personnel are to avoid the thawing and then refreezing of raw beef products to be tested for *E. coli* 0157:H7 (such as in the case of frozen imported beef trim). The sample should be held refrigerated and shipped that same day or the following day.

8. Import inspection personnel should ensure that sample integrity and security is maintained at all times.

9. Samples not meeting the above shipping criteria will be discarded upon receipt at the laboratory.

D. Sample Forms and Supplies

1. FSIS Form 10,210-3, "*Requested Sample Programs*" is used for FSIS microbiological laboratory sampling projects IMVRTE, MT08, and MT51. Sampling forms are pre-printed with a unique sample identification number and the official import inspection establishment name, number, and address. Forms are distributed directly to the import establishment. Import inspection personnel are not to photocopy blank laboratory forms to submit with samples as each form has a unique tracking number in the bar code at the upper right corner and cannot be reused.

2. Import inspection personnel are to request forms by project number or code. Orders are to be placed in increments of 25 forms and be submitted to the Import Inspection Division mailbox (importinspection@fsis.usda.gov) by the end of the first week each month with a copy furnished to the applicable RIFO. The e-mail order should include the import establishment number and the requested number of forms.

3. Import inspection personnel are to monitor form inventories to ensure that there is sufficient time for ordering and delivery of forms. Import inspection personnel should maintain at the import establishment a three (3) month supply of forms for each project as needed.

4. In the event that the supply of forms at an import establishment has been depleted, and import inspection personnel need a resupply immediately, they are to contact the Import Inspection Division Headquarters (IID-HQ) for assistance.

E. Sanitation in Handling Samples

It is extremely important that import inspection personnel exercise good hygiene and product handling practices at the import establishment to avoid contaminating sample units when conducting intact sampling. Import inspection personnel are to refer to aseptic handling procedures below when handling products during sample collection. Import inspection personnel are to properly clean and sanitize affected equipment before and after sample collection to prevent cross-contamination of the sample and inspection lots after collection of the sample.

1. For each sample selected, import inspection personnel are to:
 - a. wash and scrub hands thoroughly to the mid-forearm, using antibacterial hand soap (or a hand sanitizer at 50 ppm chlorine equivalency, if available);
 - b. open the "whirl-pack" bag without contaminating the interior;
 - c. peel open the package of sterile gloves from the top without contaminating the exterior of the gloves;
 - d. remove a glove by holding it from the wrist side opening inner surface, avoiding any contact with the outer surface of the glove;

- e. insert hand without puncturing the glove;
- f. avoid touching anything with the exterior of the glove except the sample;
- g. collect the sample with the gloved hand;
- h. place the sample into the opened bag; and
- i. remove and discard the glove and close the bag.

2. If import inspection personnel have concerns that the glove may be contaminated, they are to discard that glove and use another sterile glove.

F. Laboratory Sample Discards

1. Import inspection personnel are to complete an FSIS Form 9770-3, "*Discarded Sample Report and Findings*" for any discarded sample. The FSIS Form 9770-3 is submitted to the RIFO upon completion.

2. If the TOI for a discarded sample was assigned at an intensified or increased level of reinspection, and the lot is on FSIS hold, import inspection personnel are to select a new sample from the same lot and submit it to the appropriate laboratory for analysis.

3. If the TOI for a discarded sample was assigned at a normal level of reinspection, import inspection personnel need not select a new sample for analysis.

CHAPTER II – FOOD CHEMISTRY TESTING

I. INTRODUCTION

Import inspection personnel are to conduct food chemistry sampling on imported meat and poultry products when assigned by the AIIIS to determine an imported products compliance with FSIS regulatory requirements (e.g. sodium nitrite, total fat, total water).

NOTE: More than one chemistry analysis may be assigned to a presented lot.

II. SAMPLING

A. Preparing Samples

1. Import inspection personnel are to complete one FSIS Form 9540-3, Import Abnormal Container, Chemical, Species, Pathology Laboratory Results for all food chemistry analyses requested from each lot sampled unless otherwise instructed. The laboratory will perform all analyses identified on the form. Import inspection personnel are to maintain a copy of the 9540-3 for the case file.

2. Import inspection personnel are to send the samples to the Eastern Laboratory, Athens, Georgia, without further preparation (e.g., grinding), unless otherwise instructed. If requested by the importer, broker, or representative, food chemistry samples may be submitted to an accredited laboratory that is approved to perform the assigned analysis. When sending samples to the laboratory, import inspection personnel are to submit sample units of perishable product either refrigerated or frozen. Shelf-stable product does not need to be refrigerated or frozen.

B. Sample Size

1. Import inspection personnel are to select a food chemistry sample unit of approximately one pound of product but not less than twelve ounces.

NOTE: When sampling shelf-stable product or keep-refrigerated product such as perishable canned hams, import inspection personnel are to submit the whole unit regardless of size.

2. Depending upon how product is packaged, import inspection personnel are to obtain a sample from one single package, a portion thereof, or several packages.

a. *Example 1:* When product is packaged in 12-ounce units, such as frozen meatballs, then a single package is one sample unit.

b. *Example 2:* When product is packaged in 10-pound immediate containers, such as frozen frankfurters, then enough frankfurters are to be withdrawn from the container to obtain an approximate 1-pound sample.

c. *Example 3:* When product is packaged in 10-ounce units such as canned hams, then two cans (20-ounces) will be considered as one sample unit.

C. Sample Selection

Import inspection personnel are to submit one sample from the same production lot or code to a laboratory regardless of the number of food chemistry assignments assigned to a lot. For example, if a lot of dried, cooked, and cured beef has two food chemistry assignments, (e.g., sodium nitrite and Moisture/Protein Ratio (MPR)), import inspection personnel are to randomly select one sample for both analyses. There are exceptions below to the rule of only one (1) sample.

1. Lots subject to maximum internal temperature (MIT) - When a lot is assigned an MIT TOI and at least one other chemistry assignment, two sample units need to be submitted to the laboratory: one sample unit for MIT analysis and the other sample unit for all other food chemistry analyses.

2. Lots of cooked sausage sampled for compliance with the 30% fat limitations - When a lot of cooked sausage is assigned a food chemistry assignment for fat, a one-pound sample needs to be submitted to the laboratory from the same production lot or code.

III. REPORTING RESULTS

Laboratory results are automatically forwarded to the AIIS by the FSIS laboratory through the Laboratory Electronic Application for Results Notification (LEARN) system. When an accredited laboratory has been used and the RIFO has received the results, the RIFO and IID-HQ are to determine whether the sample result is in compliance or not. The RIFO is to write the result on the form and fax it to the Eastern Laboratory. The results will be reported in the AIIS.

A. Acceptable - Import inspection personnel are to release the lot as “US Inspected and Passed” provided all reinspection criteria are acceptable.

B. Not Acceptable - If the lot is not acceptable, import inspection personnel are to do the following:

1. If the lot is on FSIS or voluntary hold, refuse entry on the lot; or
2. If the lot has been stamped “U.S. Inspected & Passed,” the lot may be subject to recall. Import inspection personnel are to:
 - a. Determine whether any part of the sampled lot is on hold at the import establishment;
 - b. Retain all or any part of the lot still located at the import establishment; and
 - c. Report all information associated with the lot to the RIFO.

C. Indeterminate or Non-Regulatory Result - IID-HQ are to review all indeterminate results and provide guidance to the RIFO and import inspection personnel.

CHAPTER III – MICROBIAL SAMPLING OF READY TO EAT (RTE) IMPORTED PRODUCT (PROJECT IMVRTE)

I. INTRODUCTION

Import inspection personnel are to sample imported ready-to-eat (RTE) meat and poultry products when assigned by the AIIIS. Analyses may include *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* testing for all intact RTE products, and *E. coli* O157:H7 for cooked beef patties and dry or semi-dry fermented sausages.

Any product that is intended to be consumed without further preparation steps is eligible for IMVRTE sampling. Import inspection personnel are not to sample products with cooking instructions or those labeled “Not Fully Cooked.” These products are not considered RTE and are not sampled under this program.

Import inspection personnel are to collect samples following the instructions for sanitary sampling in Chapter 1 of this directive

II. SAMPLING PROCEDURES

A. Sample Size and Selection

1. Import inspection personnel are to collect samples from one specific production code or date. They are to select intact packages when they are available with the sampled lot. The product label or a copy of the label needs to accompany the sample to the laboratory.

2. Import inspection personnel are to randomly select enough samples units so that at least two (2) pounds of product is submitted to the laboratory for analysis. Import inspection personnel are to use the following guidelines when packages weigh:

a. Three pounds or more (including bulk packed cartons or combos of intact packaged product): select sample units using aseptic sampling methods. For example, if cooked beef is packaged in 10-pound units, then one 10-pound unit needs to be submitted to the laboratory for analysis. If combos of 4-pound salamis are packaged in a combo then 1 unit needs to be selected.

b. More than 1 pound but less than three pounds: collect enough units for a total of at least 2 pounds of product. For example, if cooked ham is packaged in 18-ounce units, two cooked hams in intact packages needs to be submitted to the laboratory for analysis.

B. Submitting Samples

1. Submit sample units to the laboratory either refrigerated or frozen. Shelf-stable product is not required to be refrigerated or frozen prior to submitting it to the laboratory. Complete one FSIS Form 10,210-3, Project IMVRTE, for each lot sampled and maintain a copy of the form for the case file.

2. Sample units are to be mailed to the FSIS field service laboratory identified on the FSIS Form 10,210-3.

III. REPORTING RESULTS

Laboratory results are automatically forwarded to the AIIS by the LEARN system. When a sample is reported as presumptive positive, the RIFO is notified through the Biological Information Transfer and E-mail System (BITES). The RIFO is to notify import inspection personnel of any presumptive positive samples.

A. Acceptable (Negative Results) - When an IMVRTE sample tests negative for the requested analyses, import inspection personnel are to release the lot as U.S. Inspected and Passed if all other reinspection criteria are acceptable.

B. Not Acceptable (Confirmed Positive Results) – If a lot was held at the import establishment, import inspection personnel are to refuse entry. If the lot has been stamped “U.S. Inspected & Passed,” the lot is subject to recall. Import inspection personnel are to:

- a. Determine whether any part of the sampled lot is on hold at the import establishment;
- b. Retain all or any part of the lot still located at the import establishment; and
- c. Report all information associated with the lot to the RIFO.

C. Presumptive Positive Notification - Import inspection personnel are to notify plant management of the presumptive positive notification so that the importer can place product from the sampled lot on hold and not distribute the product into commerce, unless the shipment is already on FSIS or voluntary hold. When import inspection personnel are notified of a presumptive positive IMVRTE result by the RIFO, they are to:

1. Notify the RIFO regarding the status of the product (held or not held);
2. Advise the RIFO if any portion of the positive lot has been distributed from the import establishment and the location of all contents of the distributed lot.

CHAPTER IV – PATHOLOGY TESTING

I. INTRODUCTION

Import inspection personnel are to conduct pathology sampling on any imported meat or poultry product when the product's tissue appears to be abnormal or a possible pathological lesion is identified. Pathology testing may also be performed when processed products are suspected to be out of compliance with labeling and formulation requirements. All lots of product being tested for pathology are to be placed on FSIS hold until results are received.

II. SAMPLING PROCEDURES

A. Import inspection personnel are to randomly select samples of imported meat and poultry products and perform reinspection activities, including product examinations. When import inspection personnel observe abnormal tissue (e.g., lung tissue in canned corned beef), they are to notify the RIFO.

B. The RIFO is to assist import inspection personnel in analysis of the defect. If necessary, the RIFO is to contact the District Office (DO) for Public Health Veterinarian (PHV) assistance.

C. If a PHV is available, the PHV is to attempt to make a disposition based on the defect (any disposition or analysis made by the PHV is to be in writing and attached to the case file).

D. If the defect cannot be classified, the RIFO is to assign an unscheduled pathology-physical TOI in the AIIIS and place the lot on hold. Import inspection personnel are to submit the sample to the FSIS Eastern laboratory. For intact products, import inspection personnel are to submit the affected unit. The sample unit should not be less than 12 ounces; however, if sample units weigh less than 12 ounces as packaged, sufficient intact sample units are to be submitted to equal 12 ounces. For abnormal tissue (e.g., lung tissue, salivary glands), import inspection personnel are to submit the entire section of abnormal tissue. Import inspection personnel are to complete one FSIS Form 9540-3 for each sample.

E. When assigning an unscheduled pathology laboratory sample, import inspection personnel are to send an e-mail to importinspection@fsis.usda.gov and the RIFO stating that a pathology laboratory sample has been taken. Pathology samples must not be combined with any other analysis's taken. The e-mail should include:

- date the sample was taken,
- AIIIS lot number,
- product as labeled,
- production lot number, date or can code,

- producing country,
- foreign establishment number, and,
- shipping marks.

III. REPORTING RESULTS

IID-HQ are to notify import inspection personnel when pathology results are received. Based on the findings, the product is U.S. Inspected and Passed or Refused Entry. Import inspection personnel are to close out the AIIS lot after consulting with IID Headquarters. Import inspection personnel are to notify the import establishment of all results.

A. Acceptable - Import inspection personnel are to release the lot from hold (as U.S. Inspected and Passed) provided all other reinspection criteria are acceptable.

B. Not Acceptable - Import inspection personnel are to refuse entry on the lot if results are not acceptable.

CHAPTER V – RESIDUE TESTING

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Import inspection personnel are to sample imported meat or poultry when the AIIS assigns a laboratory assignment. Import inspection personnel are to refer to “Fresh/Frozen Products Residue Sampling Table” and “Processed Products Residue Sampling Table” which can be found at the import public folder located in Outlook (Public Folders / All Public Folders / OIA / IID / Import Folder) for a list of residue compounds and species subject to testing.

B. Import inspection personnel are to follow the instructions on these charts when selecting residue samples in order to avoid sample discards. These tables are updated yearly by the Office of Public Health Science (OPHS) and the Office of International Affairs based on the annual import residue sampling plan. Import Inspection personnel are to refer to the specific instructions in this chapter when selecting import samples for residue testing.

II. SAMPLING PROCEDURES

A. Sample Size: Import inspection personnel are to refer to “Fresh/Frozen Products Residue Sampling Table” and “Processed Products Residue Sampling Table” for the exact sample size and tissue type required for each residue compound subject to testing.

B. Selecting Samples: Residue samples will be assigned by the AIIS. Import inspection personnel are to complete FSIS Form 9770-2, Import Residue Analysis, for each assigned residue.

1. An imported lot may have more than one residue analysis assigned by the AIIS.

a. Example 1: If two residue samples are assigned and are to be analyzed at the same laboratory, then import inspection personnel are to collect and submit one residue sample but complete an FSIS Form 9770-2 for each assigned residue analysis.

b. Example 2: If the assigned residue samples are analyzed at different laboratories, import inspection personnel are to collect and submit separate samples to the designated laboratories, and complete an FSIS Form 9770-2 for each assigned residue.

2. Unless otherwise instructed, import inspection personnel are to send sample units to the designated laboratory without further preparation (e.g., grinding).

C. Boneless Fresh or Frozen Manufacturing Meat or Meat Cuts

1. Import inspection personnel are to select a single piece of product (1 to 3 lbs) as per the “Fresh/Frozen Products Residue Sampling Table,” for each residue sample. When a single piece of product is not available, import inspection personnel are to select enough adjacent pieces of product to obtain the required sample size.

2. If product is in combo bins, import inspection personnel are to randomly select one combo bin from the lot and choose one selection site within the combo bin for each lab to which a residue sample is assigned. Import inspection personnel are to remove a single piece of meat that equals the required sample size (i.e., 1 or 3 pounds). When a single piece of product is not available, import inspection personnel are to select enough adjacent pieces to obtain the required sample size.

D. Processed Product

Import inspection personnel are to select a single piece of product (1 to 3 lbs) as per the “Processed Products Residue Sampling Table,” for each residue sample. Import inspection personnel are to randomly select enough cans or packages to meet the required sample size (i.e., 1 or 3 pounds).

III. PREPARING, SECURING, AND SUBMITTING SAMPLES

Import inspection personnel are to submit residue samples frozen or cold to the designated laboratory for the assigned TOI as per the “Process Products or Fresh/Frozen Residue Sampling Tables.” There should be no signs of spoilage. Dried or shelf-stable products do not need refrigeration.

IV. REPORTING RESULTS

A. Acceptable (“Not Detected” or “Positive - Not Violative” result) - When a sample analysis result is reported as “Not Detected” or “Positive - Not Violative,” the lot is not subject to further testing. Import inspection personnel are to release any lot that is on either FSIS or voluntary hold if all other reinspection criteria have been met. Import inspection personnel are to notify the RIFO and IID Headquarters (importinspection@fsis.usda.gov) of all non-violative results. Import inspection personnel are to submit all positive-non-violative results to the RIFO in Footprints in order to get the results into the AIFS.

B. Not Acceptable (Violative Result) - When a chemical residue sample analysis is reported as Violative, import inspection personnel are to notify the import establishment. If the lot is on FSIS or voluntary hold, import inspection personnel are to refuse entry. If the lot has been stamped “U.S. Inspected & Passed,” the lot may be subject to recall. Import inspection personnel are to:

- a. Determine whether any part of the sampled lot is on hold at the import establishment;
- b. Retain all or any part of the lot still located at the import establishment; and
- c. Report all information associated with the lot to the RIFO.

C. Indeterminate Results - IID-HQ are to review all indeterminate results and provide guidance to the RIFO and import inspection personnel.

CHAPTER VI – SPECIES TESTING

I. INTRODUCTION

When assigned by the AIIS, import inspection personnel are to sample imported meat and poultry products for species verification. Import inspection personnel are to refer to the specific instructions in this section when selecting import samples for species testing.

II. SAMPLING REQUIREMENTS

A. Sample Size

1. Raw Product: import inspection personnel are to randomly select one sample unit from the lot and remove a ½ pound sample from the unit (muscle tissue, if possible).

2. Cooked Product: import inspection personnel are to randomly select one sample unit (e.g., carton,) from the lot. If the unit is a non-shelf-stable item, a ½ pound sample should be removed from the unit and placed in a clean plastic bag provided by the FSIS laboratory.

B. Preparing Samples for Laboratory Analyses

Import inspection personnel are to:

1. Submit refrigerated or frozen samples to the Eastern laboratory;
2. Complete one FSIS Form 9540-3 for each species analysis. For lots with chemistry analyses also assigned, the chemistry and species sampling may be combined on one form and one sample if both are submitted to the same FSIS field service laboratory with the exception of MIT analysis; and
3. Send the sample unit to the designated laboratory without further preparation (e.g., grinding), unless otherwise instructed.

III. REPORTING RESULTS

A. Acceptable - Import inspection personnel are to verify that all species samples submitted to the field service laboratory are identified in LEARN.

B. Not Acceptable (Violative)

1. When a species sample analysis is reported as Not Acceptable (Violative), import inspection personnel are to notify the import establishment and e-mail information on the involved lot or the page from LEARN to ImportInspection@fsis.usda.gov and copy their supervisor. The involved lot is not subject to further testing. If the lot was on either FSIS or voluntary hold, import inspection personnel are to refuse entry to the lot.

2. If the product has been stamped “U.S. Inspected & Passed,” the lot may be subject to recall. Import inspection personnel are to:

- a. Determine whether any part of the sampled lot is on hold at the import establishment;
- b. Retain all or any part of the lot still located at the import establishment; and
- c. Report all information associated with the lot to the RIFO.

C. Indeterminate Results - IID-HQ are to review all indeterminate results and provide guidance to the RIFO and import inspection personnel.

DATA ANALYSIS

The Office of Data Integration and Food Protection (ODIFP) will analyze the import laboratory sampling data. ODIFP will analyze the data for trends that would lead to improvements in import reinspection procedures or guidance to foreign countries. The analysis will also identify positive trends that can be shared with all agri-business stakeholders.

Refer questions through *askFSIS* at <http://askfsis.custhelp.com>.



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