

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

FSIS NOTICE

29-08

4/24/08

SYNCHRONIZATION OF FIELD COMPUTERS

I. PURPOSE

This notice applies to all inspection program personnel who use the Performance Based Inspection System (PBIS), the Electronic Animal Disposition Reporting System (eADRS), or the Daily Activity Report (DAR) software applications. This notice announces why it is necessary to synchronize field computers; provides instructions to synchronize field computers; states when to synchronize field computers; provides notification of synchronization status; clarifies actions to take when field computers are not successfully synchronized; and provides contact information for the FSIS Service Desk.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Application Users – Personnel (e.g. inspection program personnel) who enter data into PBIS, eADRS, or DAR and are to synchronize in order for other Agency personnel to view data.

B. Application Managers – District, Regional, and Headquarters personnel (e.g., Resource Management Analysts) who use the Resource Information System (RIS) to manage Application Users' access to PBIS, eADRS, or DAR. Contact your District or Regional Office for the name of your application manager.

C. Synchronization – The process of updating data in a central consolidated server. Synchronization ensures that data are available to other Application Users and all other designated Agency users. It also allows Application Users to receive updated information from other users and Headquarters, including assignments and schedules.

DISTRIBUTION: Electronic

NOTICE EXPIRES: 5/1/09

OPI: OPPD

III. APPLICATION USER RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Data synchronization is one of the duties and responsibilities of inspection personnel. Application Users are to make a concerted effort to synchronize data at least once during their tour of duty. However, all inspection program personnel are to synchronize data at least weekly. Data synchronization minimizes the risk of data loss.

B. Computers that have not been synchronized for 21 days will be blocked from further synchronization in order to prevent synchronization problems for all Application Users. Application Users, their supervisors, their Application Managers, and their District Managers will receive an e-mail when a computer is blocked.

C. Application Users are to notify their Application Manager when they anticipate that they will be unable to synchronize for a period of 21 days or longer (e.g. because of absence from the job, vacation). The Application Manager will disable the Application User's database during the period. Application Users are to make every effort to synchronize prior to the anticipated period to minimize data loss. Application Users are to contact their Application Manager when the period is over but before resuming data entry. Application Users are to contact the FSIS Service Desk to resolve any synchronization issues (see part VII for contact information).

D. Failure to perform data synchronization in accordance with Agency policy may result in disciplinary action.

IV. INSTRUCTIONS TO SYNCHRONIZE

A. Follow the steps below to synchronize data with the consolidated server.

1. Close the PBIS, eADRS, or the Daily Activity Report if open.
2. Click the start button, select **FSIS Applications, Inspection Assignments;** and **Synchronize Data with HQ** option.
3. A prompt to establish a remote connection with Headquarters will appear if no remote connection has been established. Follow the normal process to establish a remote connection.
4. Once you choose the *Synchronize Data* option, a screen will appear stating that the computer is preparing to synchronize.
5. The synchronization status window appears when synchronization begins. The window displays each of the eight synchronization steps in sequence as each step occurs.
6. When synchronization is complete, the window will indicate that synchronization has been successful. This window **needs to remain open** until synchronization is complete.

B. Under normal circumstances, when synchronizing as recommended, the process should take less than 10 minutes on a dial-up connection. Refer questions or problems to the FSIS Service Desk.

V. NOTIFICATION OF SYNCHRONIZATION STATUS

A. Application Users and Application Managers will receive an e-mail message when synchronization has not occurred for 10 days. They will receive a second e-mail message 4 days after the first message if synchronization has still not occurred. They will receive a third and final e-mail message 7 days after the second message if there is no synchronization.

B. The final e-mail message, sent when synchronization has not occurred in 21 days, will inform the Application User, the supervisor, the Application Manager, and the District Manager that the computer has been blocked.

C. When Application Users receive an e-mail message stating that the computer has been blocked, they are not to enter data into PBIS, eADRS, or DAR. Furthermore, the blocked computer will not receive updates from the consolidated server.

D. Application Users are to contact the Application Manager to unblock a computer. **Application Users are required to re-enter data that was not synchronized when the computer was blocked or was entered after the computer was blocked.**

NOTE: Circumstances may arise when Application Users receive a notification e-mail message even when the synchronization status window states that synchronization has been successful. In these situations, the Application Users are to contact the FSIS Service Desk.

VI. APPLICATION MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

Application Managers will receive a copy of the synchronization notification messages sent to Application Users. Application Managers are to contact the recipients of the notifications to ensure that synchronization has occurred.

VII. FSIS SERVICE DESK CONTACT INFORMATION

Report any problems to the FSIS Service Desk using one of the two following methods:

1. Contact a Service Desk Technician at (800) 473-9135, or
2. File a trouble ticket in Footprints (instructions below).
 - a. Log on to the computer and establish a remote connection with Headquarters.
 - b. Open Internet Explorer and go to <http://service/footprints>
 - c. Enter your FSIS user name (e.g., Jdoe) and password to open Footprints

- d. Choose **Submit** (located under “Requests” on the left-hand side)
- e. Enter **Title: “Synchronization Problem,”** and
- f. under **Issue Information:**
 - i. Select **Service Type: FSIS Applications and Standard Load**
 - ii. Select **Category: FSIS Application Problems/Issues**
 - iii. Enter any Error Message received while trying to synchronize in the **Error Message** field
 - iv. Select the **FSIS Application** (e.g. PBIS, eADRS, or DAR)
 - v. Select **PBIS Synchronization** from the **FSIS Application Errors/Requests** dropdown list
 - vi. Choose **Go**
 - vii. Enter the **serial number** of the computer in the **Description** field
 - viii. Choose **Go** to submit the ticket; and
 - ix. Choose **Logout** (lower left-hand side of the window) to end the Footprints session.



Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development