

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

# FSIS NOTICE

53-03

12/12/03

## Update on Sample Security Seal Directive

Effective January 1, 2004, all sample boxes received at the FSIS Laboratories MUST be sealed using FSIS Form 7355-2A and FSIS Laboratories will discard sample boxes if they are unsealed or inadequately sealed. This notice cancels FSIS Notice 3-03, which provided a grace period for the discard policy.

FSIS inspection program personnel are to continue the use of the seals as described in FSIS Directive 7355.1 Revision 2 (12/16/02). As a reminder, the only "seal" in the FSIS Form 7355 2A/2B is the Container Seal FSIS 7355-2A. The other components (FSIS 7355-2B and small barcode stickers) are identification labels, not seals. The identification labels may tear during handling; however, as long as the number or barcode can be read, the sample can be identified.

The "Sealed by" box on the form 7355-2A should be completed with signature, printed name, date sealed, and form number.

Also, some of the laboratories are having problems with inspection program personnel placing the bar-coded label, from FSIS Form 7355-2B, over the bar-code number of the HACCP and Unified sample forms, or over the "Internal lab code here" block when submitting laboratory samples for analysis. Due to the adhesion compound of the pressure sensitive sticker, it is difficult to remove the sample seal bar-code from the laboratory form without tearing the form. This destroys the underlying bar-code on the laboratory form which is used for tracking all samples at each of the laboratories. Inspection program personnel are to follow the instructions found in part VII, section C of FSIS Directive 7355.1, Revision 2.

The laboratories will continue to discard samples if the integrity of the sample and submission information is compromised. Examples of when the FSIS Laboratories will discard samples are:

- The number of the identification label (FSIS 7355-2B) on the sample, the bar-coded sticker on the submission form and the number printed or listed on the container seal do not match,
- Multiple samples in one container that cannot be positively identified to the correct submission forms,

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- No submission form included with the sample in the shipping container.

Sample boxes being shipped to inspection program personnel will be sealed with tamper-evident tape. This tape is only for use by the FSIS laboratories and is not an item that can be ordered from Central Supply Services.

*/s/ Philip S. Derfler*

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