

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

FSIS NOTICE

64-12

9/28/12

FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2013 DIOXIN SURVEY

I. PURPOSE

This notice informs inspection program personnel that the FY 2013 Dioxin Survey begins on October 1, 2012. This survey will be conducted over 12 months and will gather data about dioxin levels in U.S. beef, pork, and poultry.

II BACKGROUND

FSIS, in conjunction with the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) Laboratory in Fargo, ND, is conducting the FY 2013 Dioxin Survey baseline study to determine levels of dioxins in the products that FSIS regulates. Dioxins are a group of compounds of public health concern. This is the next survey in the recurring five-year cycle of dioxin surveys. The previous dioxin survey was conducted in 2008. These compounds are ubiquitous but generally occur at very low levels throughout the environment.

III. REFERENCES AND REVIEW OF MATERIALS

Upon issuance of this notice, IPP assigned to establishments that will be participating in the FY 2013 Dioxin Survey are to be familiar with the following FSIS issuances along with the information provided in this notice:

[FSIS Directive 7355.1](#), *Use of Sample Seals for Laboratory Samples and Other Applications*.

[FSIS Directive 13,000.2](#), *Performing Sampling Tasks in Official Establishments Using the Public Health Information System*.

IV. AWARENESS MEETING WITH PLANT MANAGEMENT

A. Upon issuance of this notice, the Inspector-in-Charge (IIC) at establishments that produce products eligible for the FY 2013 Dioxin Survey will conduct an awareness meeting with establishment management to inform the establishment of the survey.

B. The IIC is to advise establishment management that sample collection will begin on or after the implementation date, and that the FY 2013 Dioxin Survey will continue for approximately twelve months. This study will include 139 steers and heifers; 136 market hogs; 151 young chickens, and 84 young turkeys for a total of 510 animals.

DISTRIBUTION: Electronic

NOTICE EXPIRES: 10/1/13

OPI: OPPD

C. The IIC is to advise the establishment management that FSIS will be collecting 0.5 (one-half) pounds of fat tissue from steers/heifers, market hog, young chickens and young turkeys, Specific instructions are outlined in Section VIII.

D. The IIC is to emphasize to establishment management that individual sample results from the FY 2013 Dioxin Survey will not be the basis for regulatory actions.

V. SAMPLE REQUEST FORMS

A. IPP will receive FY 2013 Dioxin Survey sample requests through PHIS with the sampling project codes, DIOX_13_YC (young chickens), DIOX_13_YT (young turkeys) DIOX_13_MH (market hogs-check barrow or gilt), and DIOX_13_STHR (steer, heifer – check steer or heifer), as applicable. IPP are to schedule and document sampling using the steps below:

NOTE: Eligible plants will receive sampling supplies no less than one week prior to the scheduled sampling.

B. The sample request will appear in PHIS as a sampling task on the establishment task list and can be located by using the “sampling” filter. The IPP are to add the task to their task calendar and follow the instructions in [FSIS Directive 13.000.2](#) for completing the task.

C. IPP have 30 days from the date of the sample request (sampling window) to collect and ship the sample to the ARS laboratory. IPP are to collect all samples during the 30-day sampling window. After this 30-day window has closed, IPP will no longer be able to collect the sample.

D. IPP are to answer the questions that are part of the sampling collection task through PHIS.

E. IPP are to refer to [FSIS Directive 13.000.2](#) for instructions on entering sample information in PHIS, submitting the sample information, and printing a final sample collection form. IPP are to sign the printed form and place it in the shipping container with the collected sample.

VI. SAMPLING SUPPLIES FOR FY 2013 DIOXIN SURVEY

A. When samples are collected for this study, it is very important to follow the directions below.

B. The dioxin survey supplies will be labeled “ARS-Special Project.” If supplies do not arrive within one week of the scheduled dioxin survey sample date for the establishment, PHVs are to contact the FSIS Midwestern Laboratory (MWL) via email sent to [FSIS – Sampling Supplies – Midwestern Lab](#). The request should include the establishment name and establishment number and that the sampling supplies needed are for the ARS Special Project.

C. The sampling supplies will include the following documents:

1. Dioxin Collection Instructions;
2. Dioxin Contact List; and
3. Dioxin Survey Flyer.

D. Approximately one week before the scheduled sampling date each inspection office from which fat samples will be requested will receive an insulated residue sample-shipping container labeled "ARS-Special Project".

E. The shipping container will contain the following supplies:

1. FSIS Laboratory Sample Container Seal (FSIS Form 7355-2A/ 2B);
2. Sample collection instruction sheet: "Collection of Fat for Dioxin Testing";
3. Information sheet for the Establishment: "To the Establishment Management";
4. List of Contact Persons to provide assistance during the survey;
5. Absorbent pad/paper towel;
6. Gel pack;
7. Glass jar with Teflon-coated lid (fat sample container);
8. Bubble wrap to protect the glass jar
9. Rubber bands
10. 10"x12" zipperlock plastic bag for shipment of glass jar containing fat sample;
11. Plastic sleeve for sample form;
12. FedEx Airbill; Recipient's Name- Dr. Sara Lupton or Mr. Andrew Thompson
Facility -USDA ARS Biosciences Research Laboratory Address- 1605 Albrecht
Boulevard, Fargo, ND 58102-2765; and
13. Sterile gloves

F. If any component listed above is damaged or missing from the shipping container, the IIC is to immediately notify the MWL using the instructions provided in Section VI.B.

G. IPP are to collect animal identification information before or after taking the sample.

VII. RANDOM SELECTION OF CARCASSES:

A. IPP are to randomly select a carcass for sampling before the final wash from the slaughter class designated on the sample request during the designated sample collection window.

B. If the slaughter class designated for sampling is not being slaughtered during the sample collection window, IPP are not to select another market class for sampling.

C. If the sampling task cannot be completed within the sample collection window, IPP are to:

1. Cancel the sampling task in PHIS as described in Section X of [FSIS Directive 13.000.2](#), and
2. Return unused shipping container and sampling supplies including the ARS Laboratory FedEx Air bill, to the MWL. IPP are to send a request to the MWL for a pre-addressed return FedEx Air bill, using the instructions provided in Section VI.B.

VIII. COLLECTING THE SAMPLE

A. When collecting the fat sample, IPP are to be very careful to prevent dioxin contamination of the glass sampling jar and sample collection equipment. Upon receipt the supplied gel pak should be immediately placed in the freezer.

1. IPP are not to use paper towels and are not to wipe gloved hands or knife with paper towels. Paper towels may be contaminated with dioxin and PCBs. Low levels of dioxin are often present in the environment.
2. IPP are not to open the glass jar until they start to remove the fat from the carcass.
3. IPP are to transfer the specimen directly from the carcass to the glass jar provided, and close the jar immediately after the fat is placed inside the jar.

B. If the establishment absolutely does not allow glass in the production area, IPP are to transfer the specimen from the carcass on to an acceptable clean and dust-free material, such as a stainless steel container or aluminum foil. The sample is to be removed to an acceptable area in the establishment and placed in the glass sampling jar. IPP are to exercise caution to ensure that the specimen does not become contaminated during this process.

NOTE: Do not use plastic or paper to transfer the specimen.

C. Using the following instructions for collecting samples, IPP are to:

1. Affix the bar coded-label to the sample jar;
2. Wash and sanitize hands (gloves) and knife before collecting samples;
3. Collect samples before the final carcass wash;
4. Collect samples appropriately for the species:
 - a. Beef: Collect a 0.5 (one-half) pound sample of back fat from a randomly selected healthy appearing animal that has passed inspection. Should carcass selected not contain 0.5 (one-half) pound of back fat, select another one. Do not retain carcass.
 - b. Pork: Collect a 0.5 (one-half) pound sample of subcutaneous belly fat from a randomly selected healthy appearing animal that has passed inspection. If sampling a gilt, do not include mammary tissue. Do not retain carcass.
 - c. Poultry: Collect a 0.5 (one-half) pound sample of abdominal (flap) fat from 3 (three) randomly selected healthy appearing birds from the same producer that have passed inspection. Be sure to collect carcasses prior to final (or other on-line reprocessing rinses) wash. Do not retain any birds.
5. Place the fat sample in the jar and close the lid immediately. Be sure that the lid is tightly seated to the jar. Use bubble wrap provided to protect the glass jar (wrapped around jar and fasten with rubber bands).

6. Place the closed sample jar containing the fat sample in the freezer and freeze contents thoroughly.

NOTE: Sample must be shipped frozen to the laboratory.

7. Maintain sample security during collection, freezing, and shipping.

NOTE: Do not ship samples on Fridays or the day before a holiday.

IX. HOW TO COMPLETE THE SAMPLING TASK AND SHIP THE SAMPLE

A. IPP are to ensure that all requested information is entered into PHIS. When sample collection data entry is completed, IPP are to click the "Submit to Lab" button, print a finalized form, and sign the form. PHIS will display a message stating that the sample collection information has been successfully submitted. The printed sampling form is to be placed in the sample box with the corresponding sample.

B. IPP are to follow the instruction provided in [FSIS Directive 7355.1](#), on the use of sample seals (FSIS Form 7355-2A/2B) to maintain sample security and identification.

C. IPP are to ship the sample as follows:

NOTE: IPP are not to pack a sample in the shipping container until the sample (in the sample jar) and the gel pack have been frozen for a minimum of 8 hours.

1. Remove gel pack and shipping container from the freezer. Place the absorbent pad, cardboard separator, and gel pack in the shipping container (in the order described);
2. Remove the sample jar from the freezer. Ensure that the sample jar and printed form have a bar coded-label affixed. Do not remove the sample from freezer until the sample is ready to be packed and shipped;
3. Place the completed form in the plastic sleeve provided;
4. Test the jar lid to assure it is securely closed. Place bubble wrap around jar and secure with rubber bands. Place wrapped jar and sample form in the 10"x 12" zipper lock and seal the zipper closure. Apply the bar-coded Sample Identification Label (FSIS Form 7355-2B) on the zipper lock bag;
5. Place the jar upright on top of the frozen gel pack. Place the foam plug in the shipping container and press it down into the container as deeply as possible to secure the sample;
6. Complete and sign the FSIS Laboratory Sample Seal (FSIS Form 7355-2A) and apply to the shipping container, using the instructions provided in [FSIS Directive 7355.1](#); and
7. Ship overnight to ARS Biosciences Research Laboratory in Fargo, ND using the FedEx Air bill provided.

X. HOW SAMPLE RESULTS ARE REPORTED

A. Results of individual samples collected will not be posted in LEARN or PHIS. Upon completion of the FY 2013 Dioxin Survey, FSIS will summarize and publish the survey results as an official report which will be accessible on the FSIS Web site. The report will present a summary of findings on a national basis. Individual plant results will not be published.

NOTE: Sample results from the FY 2013 Dioxin Survey are non-regulatory; therefore, establishments need not hold product.

B. If a sample contains dioxin above a certain level, additional samples may be requested from the same producer to ascertain whether or not the finding arose from an isolated incident. Therefore, IPP are to obtain all animal identification and traceback information from the establishment. IPP are to record in PHIS the name and address of the producer and include all back tags, ear tags, brands, tattoos, and other forms of identification.

XI. DATA ANALYSIS

FSIS will analyze the data collected in the nationwide FY 2013 Dioxin Survey to continue to monitor trends in the dioxin levels in animal fats, to determine whether regulatory actions (by FDA and EPA) are resulting in a change in dioxin levels in livestock, to more accurately determine trends in dioxin levels in livestock and poultry, and to detect and identify any possible sources of dioxin into the food supply.

XII. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice to the Policy Development Division by phone at 1-800-233-3935 or through [AskFSIS](#). When submitting a question, use the Submit a Question tab, and enter the following information in the fields provided:

Subject Field:	Enter Notice 64-12, FY 2013 Dioxin Survey
Question Field:	Enter question with as much detail as possible.
Product Field:	Select General Inspection Policy from the drop-down menu.
Category Field:	Select Sampling –General from the drop-down menu.
Policy Arena:	Select Domestic (U.S.) Only from the drop-down menu.

When all fields are complete, press the **Submit** button.



Acting Assistant Administrator
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