



Guidelines and Instructions for Controlling Meat and Poultry Products Pending FSIS Test Results

Today, FSIS posted to its website a compliance guide to help domestic establishments and importers of record comply with the agency's new policy in which product that FSIS tests for adulterants will not be allowed to move into commerce until acceptable results become available.

This policy becomes effective Feb. 8. Specifically, the guide articulates which products and FSIS sampling and testing programs are subject to this policy, how domestic establishments and importers of record can meet the agency's requirement for meat and poultry establishments to hold or control product when FSIS collects a sample, and how domestic establishments and importers of record can determine the amount of product to hold or control. FSIS posted this compliance guide at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Compliance_Assistance/index.asp.

This guide represents the agency's current thinking on this topic and should be considered usable as of its issuance. FSIS is providing 60 days for public comment, and the guidance document may be updated in response to the comments.

FSIS also issued instructions to inspection program personnel to implement the new policy and procedures that are effective Feb. 8 at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/FSIS_Notices_Index/index.asp.

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Export Requirement Updates



The Library of Export Requirements has been updated to reflect changes in export requirements for the following countries:

- Hong Kong
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Kazakhstan
- Malaysia
- Russia
- Singapore
- Venezuela

Complete information can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp.

Codex Public Meeting

FSIS and FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN) are hosting a public meeting to receive public comments and draft U.S. positions to be discussed at the 34th Session of the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS) in Budapest, Hungary.

The public meeting will be held on Feb. 5, from 2-4 p.m., at the FDA-CFSAN Harvey Wiley Building, 5100 Paint Branch Pkwy., Rm. 1A-001, College Park, MD 20740.

Some items scheduled for discussion include: endorsement of methods of analysis provisions in Codex standards and proposed draft principles for the use of sampling and testing in international food trade.

Documents and agenda items related to the 34th Session of the CCMAS are available at www.codexalimentarius.org/meetings-reports/en. For more information about the public meeting, contact Marie Maratos at (202) 205-7760 or marie.maratos@fsis.usda.gov.

NACMCF Re-Charter With New Members

On Jan. 28, USDA announced the re-chartering of the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) and welcomed the addition of new members.

The committee is charged with providing recommendations to the Secretaries of Agriculture and Health and Human Services (HHS) on microbiological criteria by which the safety and wholesomeness of food can be assessed. That work includes criteria for microorganisms that indicate whether foods have been adequately and appropriately processed.

Committee membership consists of scientists from academia, industry, other organizations, and federal and state governments, as well as one individual affiliated with a consumer group, who serves in a representational capacity.

NACMCF members are appointed by the USDA Secretary in consultation with the Secretary of HHS, with advice on membership from the Department of Commerce's National Marine Fisheries Service, the Department of Defense's Logistics Agency, and HHS' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The current charter for NACMCF and a list of the 22 newly appointed and eight returning members can be viewed at www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSIS/NACMCF/index.asp.

NACMCF members serve a 2-year renewable term. The committee meets approximately twice annually, while subcommittees meet more often as necessary. Background materials are also available on the website.

FSIS to Extend Comment Period for Federal Register Notice

On Dec. 6, 2012, FSIS published a *Federal Register* notice to inform establishments producing not ready-to-eat (NRTE) ground or otherwise comminuted chicken and turkey products that they must reassess their HACCP plans for these products to take into account several recent *Salmonella* outbreaks associated with the consumption of comminuted NRTE turkey products.

In response to a request made during the current comment period, FSIS will accept comments for an additional 45 days, until April 20, 2013. The agency will also provide an additional 45 days for establishments that produce NRTE comminuted chicken or turkey products to reassess their HACCP plans for those products. As explained in the *Federal Register* notice, FSIS is requiring the reassessments because of the outbreaks and recalls that have occurred. Establishments should use this additional time to conduct an in-depth reassessment of their HACCP plans for those products.

FSIS will postpone the date that inspection personnel will begin verifying that those establishments have reassessed their HACCP plans by approximately 45 days. In addition, starting approximately on April 20, 2013, the agency intends to begin the new sampling of NRTE comminuted chicken and turkey product that was announced in the notice.

The agency is accepting comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov or FSIS.regulationscomments@usda.gov.

The notice is also available on FSIS' website at www.fsis.usda.gov/Frame/FrameRedirect.asp?main=http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/2012-0007.htm.

FSIS Policy Updates

FSIS issues notices and directives to protect public health. All notices and directives are available at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&Policies/index.asp. The following policy updates were recently issued:

Notice 06-13, *Collecting Supplier Information at the Time of Sample Collection for E. coli O157:H7 in Raw Ground Beef Products and Bench Trim*

Directive 5220.1 - Revision 1, *Granting or Refusing Inspection; Voluntary Suspending or Withdrawing Inspection; and Reinstating Inspection under PHIS*

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Register for USDA's 2013 Agricultural Outlook Forum

USDA recently announced speakers for the 2013 Agricultural Outlook Forum, "Managing Risk in the 21st Century." The forum will be held Feb. 21-22 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel in Arlington, Va.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack will present the keynote address, followed by the guest speaker, former Senator Thomas A. Daschle, currently a senior policy advisor with DLA Piper. In addition, USDA Chief Economist Joseph Glauber will present the 2013 U.S. Economic Outlook for Agriculture.

This year's food safety panel, "The Food Safety Revolution: How Far Have We Come? What's Next?," will be moderated by Elizabeth Weise of *USA Today*. Panel members include: Craig Wilson, VP for Quality Assurance and Food Safety at Costco; Nancy Donley, STOP Foodborne Illness; and Dr. Rodney Moxley of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

This year also marks 20 years since a major *E. coli* O157:H7 outbreak led to that strain being declared an adulterant and 15 years of HACCP. How has food safety evolved? What has been the impact of a HACCP-based system and the battle against O157:H7 on FSIS, establishments, and consumers? What new strategies have recently been deployed, and what is the next advancement for food safety? The answers to these questions and more will be discussed.

USDA has hosted the Agricultural Outlook Forum since 1923 to provide farmers, ranchers, government and agribusinesses with sound information for decision-making. Attendees are expected to include members of farm organizations, food and fiber firms, academia, foreign governments and the news media.

Individual speakers' topics and biographies are available at www.usda.gov/ocel/forum. Plenary speeches after 6 p.m. ET on Feb. 21 will be broadcasted live on the Web, and breakout session speeches and presentations will be posted online after 6 p.m. on Feb. 22.

For the program schedule and registration, go to www.usda.gov/ocel/forum.



Updates on FSIS Testing for *E. coli*



FSIS posts bi-weekly updates for the agency's raw ground beef *E. coli* sampling program. Included are testing results of raw ground beef component samples for *E. coli* O157:H7 and STECs from FSIS routine and follow-up sampling programs. Also featured is data for non-O157 STECs by each non-O157 STEC serogroup.

To review testing results, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Ground_Beef_E.Coli_Testing_Results/index.asp.

Faces of Food Safety

Consumer confidence in our food supply comes as a result of the work of the men and women of FSIS. "Faces of Food Safety" introduces you to employees who play a key role in making our food safe.

Since coming to FSIS, Program Specialist Natasha Williams has been focused on building connections and bringing people together to achieve common goals.

As the daughter of an Air Force Officer, Williams grew up knowing that she wanted to do something big to serve her country. Today, she fulfills her lifelong ambition through a career in public health and outreach with FSIS.

Check out her story at www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSIS/Faces_Food_Safety/index.asp.