



Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

Proposed Rule to Allow Select State-Inspected Plants to Ship Across State Lines: FSIS Seeks Public Comments

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

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FSIS proposed regulations to implement a new voluntary cooperative program under which select state-inspected establishments will be eligible to ship meat and poultry products in interstate commerce. FSIS is seeking comments from the public about the interstate commerce proposed rule to be received on or before Nov. 16.

This is part of USDA's new 'Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food' initiative, which seeks to better connect consumers with local producers to help develop local and regional food systems to spur economic opportunity.

The new program was created in the 2008 Farm Bill to supplement the existing federal-state cooperative inspection program to allow state-inspected plants with 25 or fewer employees to ship products across state lines. This new cooperative interstate shipment program will provide new economic opportunities for many very small meat and poultry establishments, whose markets are currently limited.

The proposed rule was published in the Sept. 16 *Federal Register*. Comments may be submitted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>, or by mail to FSIS Docket Room, USDA, FSIS, OPPD, Docket Clearance Unit, 5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Stop 5272, Beltsville, MD 20705.

All comments must identify FSIS and docket number FSIS-2008-0039. Comments will be available for review at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/2009_Interim_&_Final_Rules_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:

Australia

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

FSIS Constituent Update is prepared by the Congressional and Public Affairs Office.

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Interstate Shipment ...

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This announcement is just one component of the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative. By successfully restoring the link between consumers with local producers there can be new income opportunities for farmers and generate wealth that will stay in rural communities; a greater focus on sustainable agricultural practices; and families can better access healthy, fresh, locally grown food.

For more information on ‘Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food,’ visit http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/_s.7_0_A/7_0_IOB?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/09/0440.xml.

FSIS Contractor to Continue Collecting Enhanced Plant Profile Information

FSIS inspectors-in-charge have been working with a contractor since January to collect and record additional plant profile information needed for the agency’s new Public Health Information System (PHIS).

As planned, work by Dynamac Corporation to collect data in establishments across the rest of the country will begin next month.

In order to collect this additional data and maximize time for inspection personnel to focus on more immediate in-plant verification activities, FSIS contracted with Dynamac.

Before Dynamac employees began collecting information, they successfully completed an FSIS identity proofing and registration process. They also had to comply with identity proofing requirements established by Congress and managed by the Office of Personnel Management. In addition to the necessary clearances, Dynamac employees were required to sign a confidentiality and non-disclosure statement.

FSIS is developing PHIS in an ongoing effort to improve the data infrastructure needed for a science-based food safety inspection system. One component of PHIS is predictive analytics which will require an enhanced plant profile that includes a significant amount of detail about each establishment’s food safety systems, operations and demographics. This function supports a data-driven approach to inspection, auditing and sampling.

For more information, contact Murray Penner, Labeling and Program Delivery Division, Office of Policy and Program Development at (301) 504-0879, or by e-mail at Murray.Penner@fsis.usda.gov.

Recent Policy Updates

FSIS issues notices and directives to protect public health. The following policy update was recently issued:

Notice 63-09, *Date of Issuance for Export Certificate*

All notices and directives are available at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/index.asp.

Get Answers at AskFSIS

AskFSIS is a Web-based technology and policy question-and-answer forum on topics such as exporting, labeling, inspection, programs and procedures.

In addition, *AskFSIS* offers Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds that link back to the Q&As. Visit <http://askfsis.custhelp.com/> to find the answers to your questions.

Recently posted topics include:

FSIS Directive 6410.1

Linking Noncompliance Records

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/askfsis.cfg/php/enduser/std_adp.php?p_faqid=1300

Verifying Corrective Actions

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/askfsis.cfg/php/enduser/std_adp.php?p_faqid=1301

Public Meeting Scheduled About Agenda for Codex Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance

USDA's Office of Food Safety and FDA will host a public meeting to receive comments on agenda items and draft U.S. positions that will be discussed at the third session of the Codex Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).

The public meeting is scheduled for Sept. 24 from 1 to 3 p.m. at USDA's James L. Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Room 107-A, Washington, D.C. Pre-registration is recommended. Interested parties may also submit written comments at the public meeting or e-mail David G. White at David.White@fda.hhs.gov.

Three items on the AMR agenda will be discussed during the public meeting: matters referred to the task force by the Commission and the other Codex committees; information on the work by the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health on antimicrobial resistance; and proposed draft guidelines for risk analysis of foodborne antimicrobial resistance (N01-2008, N02-2008, N03-2008), comments submitted at step 3.

Each issue listed will be fully described in documents distributed, or to be distributed, by the Secretariat prior to the meeting. Members of the public may access copies of these documents at the meeting or on the Codex Web site at <http://www.codexalimentarius.net/current.asp>.

For more information, contact Doreen Chen-Moulec at (202) 205-7760 or Doreen.Chen-Moulec@fsis.usda.gov.

Register for Codex Public Meeting on Nutrition and Foods

The Office of Food Safety and the FDA will sponsor a public meeting to receive comments on agenda items and draft U.S. positions for discussion at the 31st session of the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU).

The meeting is scheduled for Oct. 8 from 1 to 4 p.m. in the auditorium (1A003) of the Harvey Wiley Federal Building, 5100 Paint Branch Pkwy., College Park, Md. Pre-registration is required. For more information, contact Nancy Crane at (301) 436-1450 or Nancy.Crane@fda.hhs.gov.

Documents related to the 31st session of the CCNFSDU will be accessible on the Codex Alimentarius Web site at <http://www.codexalimentarius.net/current.asp>.

New Podcasts: Renew Your Subscription!

Effective Sept. 16, the agency switched to a new digital format for consumer and industry podcasts to provide listeners with the highest quality of audio and video.

To continue automatically receiving podcasts, renew your subscription. For assistance, e-mail podcast@fsis.usda.gov.



This week, FSIS released podcasts helpful to consumers as well as plant owners and operators.

Food Safety At Home: Let's Talk Hot Dogs

Industry: Risk Assessments—*E. coli* O157:H7 in Ground Beef

Listen to these new podcasts and listen renew your subscription at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/news_&_events/Podcasts/index.asp.

Spanish language consumer podcasts are available at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/En_Espanol/Podcasts_SP/index.asp.

FSIS to Host Web Outreach Seminars

To promote a uniform understanding of FSIS regulations, the agency launched a six-part series of Web outreach seminars for plant owners and operators—especially those of small and very small plants.

The agency will host the fourth seminar, “In-Plant Validation of Food Safety Interventions in Poultry Products,” on Oct. 7.

This seminar will illustrate methods of determining the effectiveness of food safety interventions in small and very small poultry establishments.

Three 90-minute sessions will be offered via net conferencing at 11 a.m., 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. (ET) to accommodate plant owners and operators nationwide.

To register, go to http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Regulatory_Web_Seminars/index.asp. E-mail questions about upcoming outreach seminars to FSIS.Seminars@fsis.usda.gov.

International Clean Hands Week Kicks Off Sunday

Sept. 20–26 is International Clean Hands Week, and FSIS is encouraging employees and their families to practice healthy handwashing, especially as flu season approaches. In addition to handwashing, it is important to keep all food surfaces clean to reduce foodborne illnesses.

Be Food Safe with four easy steps: Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill. For more information on keeping hands and surfaces clean, visit http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Be_FoodSafe/index.asp.

USDA to Host 2010 Food Safety Education Conference

USDA and NSF International are hosting the 2010 Food Safety Education Conference, *Advancements in Food Safety: Trends, Tools and Technologies*, March 23-26, at the Hyatt Regency in Atlanta.

Food safety educators and other professionals worldwide will have the opportunity to discover the latest advancements in food safety education, including trends, tools and technologies.

For more information, visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Atlanta2010>.