



Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

FSIS Offers Assistance With Food Defense Plans for Small and Very Small Plants

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

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FSIS has developed general guidance to assist small and very small establishments to voluntarily adopt sound and functional defense plans. This information will be mailed this month to establishments that did not have a food defense plan when surveyed in 2008.

By reviewing the document and signing the cover page, the establishment will be able to answer “yes” when FSIS inspection personnel ask whether they have a plan on the upcoming survey.

The plan serves to document procedures that an establishment likely already has in place. In addition, the plan will provide guidance on how to maintain a more specific functional plan through periodic reviews and annual testing.

FSIS wants at least 90 percent of establishments to have a functional food defense plan. If this goal is not achieved, the agency will consider moving forward with rulemaking to mandate them.

Having a functional plan will maintain a safe working environment for employees, contribute to the protection of consumer health, provide additional process control and expedite the establishment’s ability to respond quickly during emergencies.

The new general food defense plan is available at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Small_Very_Small_Plant_Outreach/index.asp. For additional assistance, contact the Small Plant Help Desk at 1-877-FSIS-HELP (877-374-7435).



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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:

Singapore

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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AskFSIS RSS Feed Is Available

AskFSIS syndicates its content through an RSS feed. RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication. It's an easy way for you to keep up with news and information that's important to you, and helps you avoid the conventional methods of browsing or searching for information on Web sites.

Now the content you want can be delivered directly to you without cluttering your inbox with e-mail messages.

What Do I Need to Use the RSS Feed?

To use RSS feeds, you need a feed reader (also called news aggregator) installed on your computer. An RSS reader is a small software program that collects and displays RSS feeds. It allows you to scan headlines from a number of news sources in a central location. The news reader checks the feed for any recent changes.

Some browsers, such as the current versions of Firefox and Safari have built-in RSS readers. If you're using a browser that doesn't currently support RSS, there are a variety of RSS readers available on the Web; some are free to download and others are available for purchase. FSIS does not endorse any particular reader.

How Do I Use RSS Feeds?

The first step is to choose an RSS reader. Each reader has a slightly different way of adding a new feed, also called a "channel." Follow the directions for your reader. In most cases, here's how it works:

- Click on the link or small XML or RSS icon near the feed you want. You'll see a page displaying XML code.
- From your web browser's address bar, copy the URL (Web address).
- Paste that URL into the "Add New Channel" or "Add New Feed" section of the reader. The RSS feed will start to display and regularly update the headlines for you.

(See page four for recently posted topics)

Recent Policy Updates

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

Notice 67-09, General Food Defense Plan.

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

Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill

Clean: When preparing food, wash hands and surfaces often.

Separate: Don't cross-contaminate.

Cook: Cook food to safe minimum internal temperatures as checked with a food thermometer.

Chill: Promptly refrigerate or freeze leftovers.

For more helpful tips to prepare a safe and wholesome meal, go to http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/index.asp.

Minneapolis Welcomes New District Manager

The Office of Field Operations is pleased to announce the selection of Dr. Phyllis Adams as the Minneapolis district manager. FSIS wishes her much success as she begins her lead oversight responsibility for this district.

Adams began her career with the agency in 1990 as a supervisory veterinary medical officer in California where she served as an inspector-in-charge in various livestock and poultry slaughter and processing establishments. In 2001, she became a frontline supervisor in the Fresno circuit and then became a deputy district manager in Minneapolis in 2005.

Prior to her career with FSIS, Adams practiced veterinary medicine in various mixed animal hospitals. She graduated from Tuskegee Institute with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree and from California State University with a master's degree in public health.

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>.

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. To find the answers to your questions and receive automatic updates, subscribe at <http://askfsis.custhelp.com/>.

Recently posted topics include:

Searching for Specific Title 9 CFR Regulations

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/askfsis.cfg/php/enduser/std_adp.php?p_faqid=1306

How to Search for FSIS Resources

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/askfsis.cfg/php/enduser/std_adp.php?p_faqid=1307

Updates on FSIS Testing for *E. coli* O157:H7

Weekly updates for the FSIS raw beef *E. coli* sampling program are posted to the agency's Web site.

For comparative 2008 and 2009 results, go to http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Ground_Beef_E.Coli_Testing_Results/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 fifth seminar, *Selecting Scientific Documentation to Support Establishments' HACCP Plan*, on Oct. 27.

With the introduction of HACCP, meat and poultry processors are required to provide supporting documentation for all HACCP decisions. These decisions in hazard analysis, critical control points, monitoring, validation and related issues. utilize scientific documentation.

This seminar presents a series of examples that will illustrate proper selection of scientific documentation and highlight available resources to aid in these decisions.

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.



New Podcast: 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 this podcast helpful to consumers.

Food Safety at Home: Cooking at High Altitude

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