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# FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

## FSIS Updates

### *E. coli* O157:H7 Reports

FSIS has updated *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) O157:H7 testing data to include information through November 18, 2008.

#### Results from Analysis of Raw Ground Beef and Raw Ground Beef Component Samples for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7

Raw Ground Beef						
Source	As of November 18, 2007			As of November 16, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	10,692	24	0.22	9,972	46	0.46
Retail Stores	156	0	0.00	327	0	0.00
Imports	62	0	0.00	38	1	2.63
Raw Ground Beef Components						
Source	As of November 18, 2007			As of November 16, 2008		
	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive	Number Analyzed	Number Positive	Percent Positive
Federal Plants	666	3	0.45	2,056	16	0.78
Imports	0	0	0.00	474	3	0.63
The above information is based upon data in the FSIS electronic data system as of November 18, 2008. Results are from FSIS routine and follow-up sampling programs.						

No new positives have been identified in the past two weeks. The percent positive rate continues to be higher in 2008 compared to 2007 and FSIS continues to monitor these results.

Over the past several months, articles have accompanied the above table. These articles have provided information about *E. coli* O157:H7 sampling programs. Much of this information is available through FSIS Directives and Notices on the Agency's Web site. Starting in

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## Export Requirement Updates



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

**Cuba**

**Japan**

Complete information can be found at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/Export\\_Information/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp).



## ***E. coli* Testing Results ...**

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December, only the table and general information will be reported in the *FSIS Constituent Update*.

Individual positive results from the raw ground beef sampling programs for 2008 are reported on FSIS' Web site at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/2008\\_Ecoli\\_Positive\\_Results/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/2008_Ecoli_Positive_Results/index.asp).

## **FSIS Reopens Comment Period to Discuss Animal Raising Claims**

FSIS has reopened the comment for Animal Raising Claims and will accept comments until December 15.

FSIS and USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) held a public meeting on October 14 to discuss and review policies on the use of animal raising claims in the labeling of meat and poultry products. FSIS and AMS encouraged public input to evaluate its policies on claims related to the use of antibiotics in poultry and on animal raising claims.

To view a transcript of the public meeting, visit the FSIS Web site at [www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Animal\\_Raising\\_Claims\\_101408.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Animal_Raising_Claims_101408.pdf).

Additional submissions to FSIS must include docket number FSIS-2008-0026. Comments may be submitted through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Submissions may also be mailed to, Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, FSIS Docket Room, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W. Room 2534, Washington, DC 20250.

## **Membership Changes are on the Horizon for the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection**

FSIS will soon solicit nominations for membership on the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI). Additional details will be provided in upcoming *FSIS Constituent Updates*.

Established in 1971, NACMPI was created to advise and make recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture on meat, poultry and egg products inspection programs. Membership is drawn from a broad range of groups interested in food safety,

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## **FSIS Offers Safe Handling Tips for the Thanksgiving Holiday**

Thanksgiving dinner often leaves consumers feeling “stuffed.” Mishandled or improperly prepared stuffing can lead to foodborne illness - not a satisfying ending to a Thanksgiving meal.

As you prepare your holiday meal, FSIS encourages consumers to remember these four easy tips - **Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill**:

**Clean:** When preparing stuffing, wash hands and surfaces often.

**Separate:** Don't cross-contaminate. Stuffing should not be prepared ahead. The dry and wet ingredients for stuffing can be prepared separately ahead of time and chilled, but do not mix wet and dry ingredients until it will be cooked.

**Cook:** Cook stuffing to a safe minimum internal temperature as checked with a food thermometer.

**Chill:** Promptly refrigerate or freeze leftover stuffing.

For more information about how to handle and prepare stuffing, go to [www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact\\_Sheets/Turkey\\_Basics\\_Stuffing/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Turkey_Basics_Stuffing/index.asp).

## ***NACMPI ...***

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including industry, academia, State and local government officials, public health organizations and consumer organizations. Committee appointments are made by the Secretary.

The full committee consists of no fewer than 16 and no more than 18 members. Each person selected is expected to serve a two-year term and existing members are permitted to serve three consecutive two-year terms. The committee generally meets twice a year and addresses food safety policy issues affecting USDA.

To learn more about NACMPI, visit FSIS' Web site at [www.fsis.usda.gov/About\\_Fsis/NACMPI/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/About_Fsis/NACMPI/index.asp).

## **FSIS Issues New and Revised Directives**

This week FSIS issued two directives addressing procedures and protocols for conducting meat and poultry recalls and foodborne illness investigations.

Directive 8080.1, Revision 5, *Recall of Meat and Poultry Products*, provides instructions to Agency personnel and industry in the event of a meat or poultry recall. The directive is being updated four years after the last issuance based on lessons learned from recent recalls and Public Health Alerts. Many of the revisions incorporate critical lessons learned and fulfill the Agency's goal of transparency and successful communication with stakeholders.

The revised directive formalizes procedures for public health alerts, FSIS issued these alerts in situations where a product or class of products may present a public health hazard but key facts are not available, such as if a specific product is not identifiable or if the product has far beyond its production or availability date.

Also, FSIS will issue a Recall Notification Report for products that were transferred from one firm to another and remained in control of the company, even though the products are not available for purchase by consumers.

Additional updates to the recall directive include a quarterly recall assessment report to routinely assess policies and procedures, incorporation of the retail list final rule implemented in August 2008, formalized Office of International Affairs procedures for recalls involving imported products and a weighted effectiveness check process to give priority verification for at-risk groups, such as school districts.

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## Holiday Help for Consumers



### Ask Karen

Consumers with food safety questions can “Ask Karen,” the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at [AskKaren.gov](http://AskKaren.gov).

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## USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline

Food safety experts are available year-round from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time to answer questions in English and Spanish about safely preparing and cooking foods.

**The hotline will be staffed from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Eastern time on Thanksgiving Day. The toll-free number is 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854). Recorded messages are available 24 hours a day.**

## Directives ...

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The new Directive 8080.3, *Foodborne Illness Investigations*, provides central guidance for Agency personnel and affords greater transparency for collaboration with other public health partners. FSIS formalizes best practices and standard operating procedures for conducting foodborne illness investigations that have been applied across various program areas.

As a public health agency, FSIS works closely with other federal, state and local partners. This directive demonstrates how the Agency applies sound epidemiological principles for conducting investigations and identifying FSIS regulated products for potential regulatory action.

Other directives were also published this week:

- Directive 5000.4 - *Performing Preoperational Sanitation Inspection 01B02 in Processing Operations*;
- Directive 5420.4, Revision 5 - *Homeland Security Threat Condition Response, Emergency Procedures for the Office of International Affairs Import Inspection Division*;
- Directive 5500.2, Revision 3 - *Significant Incident Response*;
- Directive 5500.2, Revision 3, Attachment 1 - *IR Process via the FIMS Based on Incident Information*;
- Directive 8010.1 - *Issuance of Appendix 1*; and
- Directive 8080.3 - *Foodborne Illness Investigations*.

To review all FSIS directives, visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/Directives/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Directives/index.asp).

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**The *FSIS Constituent Update* will not publish November 28, and will resume publishing on December 5.**

**The staff wishes you a happy and healthy Thanksgiving holiday.**