



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety
and Inspection
Service

Washington, D.C.
20250

April 8, 2010

William Marler, Esq.
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6600 Columbia Center
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Seattle WA 98104

Dear Mr. Marler:

Thank you for your letters dated February 22, 2010 and April 1, 2010. Thank you also for submitting the associated materials on non-O157 Shiga-toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) testing methods. These materials were forwarded to the FSIS scientists assigned to study the available data on *E. coli* non-O157 STEC. The Agency will consider these materials as it continues to evaluate how it should address the presence of non-O157 STEC in or on the products it regulates.

With respect to your request on how you may stay informed about FSIS's progress on the development of laboratory capacity to detect and isolate various non-O157 STEC and on the progress of your petition, FSIS does not provide individual progress reports or updates on specific issues associated with petitions. As noted in my previous letter, when FSIS has an appropriate laboratory method for conducting regulatory sampling for non-O157 STEC, and has developed a plan for how it intends to address this issue, it will make the plan available to the public for comment. At that time, the Agency will also issue a final response to your petition.

Thank you again for your letter and additional materials. If you wish, you may continue to submit materials on non-O157 STEC for consideration by FSIS to Mary Porretta, Petitions Manager, and she will provide them to the appropriate Agency scientists.

Sincerely,

Philip S. Derfler
Assistant Administrator
Office of Policy and Program Development

cc:

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