UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS NOTICE	02-14	1/8/14

VERIFICATION OF CARCASSES THAT AN ESTABLISHMENT FURTHER PROCESSES WITHOUT AN OFFICIAL INSPECTION LEGEND

I. PURPOSE

This notice provides inspection program personnel (IPP) with instructions for verification activities at establishments that elect not to have the mark of inspection applied to carcasses remaining in the facility for further processing. These instructions were previously issued in FSIS Notice 38-09.

II. BACKGROUND

A. Livestock slaughter and processing systems have changed over the years. Most establishments that slaughter swine, cattle, or sheep within the establishment also fabricate the carcasses into various primals, subprimals, trimmings, and other meat products. The establishment then ships the parts or products, rather than marked carcasses, in fully labeled containers for further processing at other establishments.

B. 9 CFR 316.9(a) requires that carcasses that have been inspected and passed in an official establishment bear the mark of inspection following inspection on the slaughter floor. Some establishments have requested, however, that carcasses that they further process within the establishment not be marked following inspection.

C. The Agency intends to revise its regulations to remove the requirement that carcasses bear the mark following inspection on the slaughter floor if the carcasses are to be further processed in the establishment. Pending this rulemaking, IPP are to allow inspected and passed carcasses to leave the slaughter floor without being marked provided that the establishment:

1. Requests in writing to the Inspector-In-Charge (IIC) that all carcasses not be marked with the inspection legend;

2. Further processes the unmarked carcasses at the establishment; and

3. Maintains control of the carcasses in the manner described in part III of this directive.

D. If the establishment ships carcasses that have been inspected and passed after slaughter without further processing at the establishment, these instructions would not apply, and IPP are to verify the mark of inspection is applied to the carcasses, in most cases, before the carcasses leave the slaughter floor. In rare instances, the establishment may hand apply the mark of inspection after the carcasses have left the slaughter floor, but before the carcasses leave the establishment.

III. VERIFICATION OF UN-MARKED CARCASSES

A. If an establishment that further processes carcasses within the establishment before shipment requests that the carcasses not be marked following inspection on the slaughter floor, then IPP are to verify that the establishment has procedures in place in its Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan or Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures or other prerequisite program to ensure that unmarked carcasses are processed in the establishment, and that carcasses that are not further processed in the establishment do not leave the establishment unmarked. If the establishment does not have these procedures in place, then IPP are to continue to apply the mark of inspection to carcasses.

B. IPP are to verify through records review or direct observation (see FSIS Directive 5000.1, *Verifying an Establishment's Food Safety System*) that the establishment's procedures ensure that:

1. The establishment properly identifies and handles carcasses or parts eligible for the mark of inspection through edible channels, so that only edible, inspected and passed product goes for fabrication. IPP verification activities may include verifying that the establishment can account for the number of carcasses slaughtered and moved through the establishment and verifying that the species is correctly identified on the final label;

2. Retained carcasses or parts remain under FSIS control until the establishment makes corrections that will render the carcass or part eligible to bear the mark of inspection (e.g., carcasses retained for residue sample or pending pathology disposition are held in FSIS controlled retained cages in the cooler); and

3. Whole carcasses transported to another establishment bear the mark of inspection.

NOTE: If IPP suspect or identify that the establishment is slaughtering animals outside the approved hours of inspection, IPP are to follow the instructions in FSIS Directive 12,700.1, *Operations Occurring Outside of Approved Hours.*

C. When verifying export requirements, IPP are to use the export library to determine whether product is eligible for shipment to foreign countries when an establishment further processes carcasses without an inspection legend. IPP are to verify that specific countries do not require that the mark of inspection be applied to carcasses on the slaughter floor.

D. IPP are to continue to verify that establishments comply with applicable regulations for separating custom exempt slaughter from inspected slaughter (see FSIS Directive 5930.1, *Custom Exempt Review Process*).

IV. VERIFICATION OF MARKED CARCASSES

A. If an establishment elects to follow the policy in this directive and then requests in writing to the IIC at the establishment to return to the previous procedure of marking carcasses before leaving the slaughter floor, then IPP are to verify through direct observation that carcasses are marked as required before leaving the slaughter floor. When IPP perform this procedure, they are to:

1. Record the procedure under the General Labeling Task in PHIS as a directed task and choose the reason code "as instructed in policy issuance;" and

2. Record the procedure under 9 CFR 316.9.

B. If the establishment does not follow its procedures after requesting to not mark carcasses, the IIC is to notify the establishment in writing that IPP will verify that the mark of inspection is applied to carcasses before leaving the slaughter floor from that point forward.

V. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this directive to the Policy Development Staff through askFSIS or by telephone at 1-800-233-3935. When submitting a question, use the Submit a Question tab, and enter the following information in the fields provided:

Subject Field:	Enter **Notice 02-14**
Question Field:	Enter question with as much detail as possible.
Product Field:	Select **General inspection policy** from the drop-down menu.
Category Field:	Select **Slaughter/Livestock** from the drop-down menu. from the drop-down menu.
Policy Arena:	Select **Domestic** from the drop-down menu.

When all fields are complete, press **Continue.**

Assistant Administrator
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