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# FSIS Constituent Update

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## "At Least Equal To" Data System Guidance Posted for State MPI Programs Electing Not To Use PHIS

FSIS is announcing the availability of the "At Least Equal To" Data System Guidance for State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) Programs electing not to use the Public Health Information System (PHIS). This guidance supplements the "At Least Equal To" Compliance Guidelines for State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) programs.

FSIS has posted this guidance at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/inspection/state-inspection-programs/state-inspection-and-cooperative-agreements/guidance-documents-for-state-and-local-agencies>.

FSIS has also provided this guidance to all states participating in Cooperative State MPI Programs.

### In This Issue

- 1 Data System Guidance Posted
- 1 Meat Slaughter Industry Survey
- 1 Export Requirements
- 2 Lab Services Rate Changes
- 2 Update: FSIS Testing for *E. coli*
- 2 Get Answers at *AskFSIS*
- 3 FSIS Conducts NACMPI Meeting
- 3 Policy Updates
- 3 We Want to Hear From You
- 3 FSIS Food Recalls and Alerts
- 3 FSIS' FOIA Reading Room

### Export Requirement Updates



The Library of Export Requirements has been updated for the following countries:

Australia (Egg Products)  
People's Republic of China  
Republic of Macedonia  
Thailand  
Ukraine  
Uruguay

Complete information can be found at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/international-affairs/exporting-products>.

## Meat Slaughter Industry Survey

In November, FSIS began an effort to survey the meat slaughter and processing industry to add to FSIS' understanding of the practices and technologies used to control pathogens and promote food safety. The survey has been sent to eligible beef and pork slaughter establishments, and will close on February 7. FSIS will analyze the results and compare them to those from a survey conducted in 2004 to assess food safety and technology adoption trends.

FSIS has contracted with Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International to develop and conduct the nationwide survey. RTI has contacted eligible establishments with a pre-survey brochure enclosed in a USDA envelope and with pre-survey phone calls addressed to the plant manager. The survey, which can be completed in paper form or online, seeks to provide an accurate representation of the industry as a whole.

RTI International will report individual responses to this survey to FSIS, but it will use data masking techniques so that individual establishments cannot be identified. Those who respond to the survey will receive a summary report of the survey.

For additional information, contact Gary Noyes at 301-504-3672 or at [Gary.Noyes@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:Gary.Noyes@fsis.usda.gov).

# FSIS Announces 2015 Rate Changes for the Basetime, Overtime, Holiday, Laboratory Services Rates

On Jan. 14, 2015, FSIS published in the *Federal Register* a notice announcing the 2015 rates it will charge meat and poultry establishments, egg products plants, and importers and exporters for providing voluntary, overtime, and holiday inspection and identification, certification and laboratory services. FSIS will begin charging the rates Feb. 22, 2015.

FSIS publishes the notice annually in accordance with the April 22, 2011, final rule that amended agency regulations to establish formulas for calculating the rates it charges meat and poultry establishments, egg products plants, and importers and exporters for basetime, overtime, holiday and laboratory services.

The notice is available at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations/federal-register/federal-register-notice>.

For further information on the rates, contact Michael Toner at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Room 2159, South Building, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700, via telephone at 202-690-8398 or fax as 202-690-4155.

## Update: FSIS Testing for *E. coli*



FSIS posts bi-weekly updates for the agency's raw ground beef *E. coli* sampling program. Included are testing results of raw ground beef component samples for *E. coli* O157:H7 and STECs from FSIS routine and follow-up sampling programs. Also featured is data for non-O157 STECs by each non-O157 STEC serogroup.

Between June 4, 2012 and Dec. 31, 2014, FSIS laboratory services analyzed a total of 8,180 beef trim samples (7,004 domestic and 1,176 imported); 2,371 routine follow-up samples (2,257 domestic and 114 imported); and 260 non-routine follow-up/traceback samples. One hundred samples were found to be positive; 46 were domestic trim samples, 4 were imported trim samples; 46 were domestic follow-up samples; and 4 were non-routine follow-up/traceback samples. To date, three samples have been positive for both O157:H7 and non-O157 STEC, and six samples have been positive for two different non-O157 O-groups.

To review testing results, visit the *E. coli* data tables at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/data-collection-and-reports/microbiology/ec/>.

## 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 view recently posted topics.

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## FSIS Conducts NACMPI Meeting

FSIS hosted the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI) on Jan. 13-14, 2015, in Washington, D.C. This was the first meeting for 14 new members of the committee (see the full committee listing at <http://www.usda.gov/2014/12/0277.xml>).

During the plenary and subcommittee breakout sessions, the NACMPI reviewed and developed recommendations for the following issues:

- FSIS' Evaluation and Management of Chemical Hazards with the National Residue Program; and
- FSIS Usage of the USDA, Economic Research Service (ERS) Cost Calculation Model.

In addition to the meeting presentations, the official transcript and the committee's final recommendations on the two issues will be available on the NACMPI Web page upon final review and clearance at [www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations/advisory-committees/nacmpi/nacmpi-meetings/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations/advisory-committees/nacmpi/nacmpi-meetings/).

Established in 1971, the NACMPI provides advice to the Secretary of Agriculture concerning State and Federal programs with respect to meat, poultry and processed egg products inspection.

For more information on NACMPI, visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/nacmpi>.

## FSIS Policy Updates

FSIS notices and directives on public health and regulatory issues are available at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations>. The following policy updates were recently issued:

**Notice 04-15**, *Actions to Facilitate Industry Access to the Public Health Information System (PHIS)*

**Notice 05-15**, *Interpreting Results of FSIS Verification Sampling of Domestic Beef Product Derived From Advanced Meat Recovery Systems*

## We Want to Hear From You

FSIS wants feedback from its readers. Let us know what you like about the *Constituent Update*. Please send comments and suggestions regarding content to [FSISUpdate@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:FSISUpdate@fsis.usda.gov). If you don't regularly receive the *Constituent Update*, sign up for it at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/newsroom/meetings/newsletters/constituent-updates>.

### FSIS Food Recalls and Alerts

Stay up-to-date on FSIS' food recall alerts by visiting FSIS' Current Recalls and Alerts Web page at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls>.

You can also receive e-mail notifications when public health alerts and recalls are issued. Register at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/subscribe>.

### Check Out FSIS' FOIA Reading Room

The FOIA Reading Room is an online library of documents previously released through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), which are the subject of frequent information requests.

Visit the Reading Room at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fsis\\_electronic\\_reading\\_room](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fsis_electronic_reading_room).