



Deputy Under Secretary Almanza Testifies Before Appropriations Committee

On Feb. 24, 2016, Deputy Under Secretary Al Almanza appeared before the House Agriculture Appropriations Committee to testify on FSIS' Fiscal Year 2017 Budget Request. Almanza provided a brief overview of the Agency and its modernization goals, and spoke about the new pathogen reduction performance standards for chicken parts, the Agency's focus on increased scientific analysis, and the Public Health Information System (PHIS).

This year, the Agency is requesting funding to expand lab analysis, Whole Genome Sequencing, and testing. A key part of FSIS' food safety efforts in sampling and analysis for pathogens, adulterants, and contamination shows that the Agency's sampling encourages establishments to improve the effectiveness of their food safety systems.

Almanza invited all of the members of the subcommittee and their staff to attend a plant tour and see FSIS' daily food safety work in action. Details on the hearing can be found at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/newsroom/communications+to+congress/congressional-testimony>.

Next month, Almanza will appear before the House Agriculture Committee to discuss FSIS and its mission to members of the Committee.

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Export Requirement Updates

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

Cayman Islands
Costa Rica
Hong Kong
Japan
Malaysia
Republic of Korea
Taiwan

For a complete list of countries, visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/international-affairs/exporting-products>.

Policy Updates

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

Docket No. FSIS-2016-0005 - *National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection*

Docket No. FSIS-2016-0006 - *Codex Alimentarius Commission, Meeting of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues*

Docket No. FSIS-2016-0009 - *Educational Meetings on the Final Rule on Mandatory Inspection of Fish of the Order Siluriformes and Products Derived From Such Fish*

Comment Period Extended for National Residue Program: Monitoring Chemical Hazards Notice

In response to a request for an extension from industry groups, FSIS is extending the comment period by 30 days for the *Federal Register* notice “National Residue Program: Monitoring Chemical Hazards” (80 FR 81272; Dec. 29, 2015). The Notice announced that FSIS is standardizing the approach it will take for instances when sample results from livestock or poultry carcasses reveal chemicals for which neither the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) nor the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have set tolerances or regulatory levels. Such instances are rare and have been previously addressed on a case-by-case basis. The original deadline to submit comments was Feb. 29, 2016, but the new deadline is now March 30, 2016.

Comments on the notice may be submitted by either of the following methods: Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> or via mail, including CD-ROMs, etc., to Docket Room Manager, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Mailstop 3782, Room 8-163B, Washington, DC 20250-3700. Hand- or courier-deliver submittals should be delivered to Patriots Plaza 3, 355 E. St., SW, Room 8-163B, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

To view the notice, visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulations/federal-register/federal-register-notices>.

We Want to Hear From You

The *Constituent Update* Content and Technical Review Committee seeks feedback from its readers. Please let us know what you think about the *Constituent Update* and send comments and suggestions regarding content to FSISUpdate@fsis.usda.gov. If you aren't regularly receiving the *Constituent Update*, you can sign up for it at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/newsroom/meetings/newsletters/constituent-updates>.

FSIS *Constituent Update* is prepared by the Congressional and Public Affairs Staff, Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Education

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Update: FSIS Testing for *E. coli*

FSIS posts bi-weekly updates of 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 Feb. 21, 2016, FSIS laboratory services analyzed a total of 12,542 beef trim samples (10,758 domestic and 1,784 imported), 3,172 routine follow-up samples (3,058 domestic and 114 imported), and 326 non-routine follow-up/traceback samples. One-hundred and forty-nine samples were found to be positive; 84 were domestic trim samples, four were imported trim samples, 57 were domestic follow-up samples, and four were non-routine follow-up/traceback samples. To date, three samples have been positive for both O157:H7 and at least one non-O157 STEC strain, and eight 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/eci/>.

FSIS to Hold Educational Meetings for Importers on Inspection of Siluriformes Fish

FSIS will be conducting a series of educational meetings regarding the new final rule, “Mandatory Inspection of Fish of the Order Siluriformes and Products Derived from Such Fish,” which was published in the *Federal Register* on Dec. 2, 2015. The purpose of the meetings is to explain and review the regulatory requirements contained in the final rule as they apply to importers.

The final rule, which applies to both domestically-raised and imported Siluriformes fish, becomes effective March 1, 2016, with an 18-month transitional period. During the transitional period, FSIS will provide guidance and work with domestic establishments and importers to ensure that they understand FSIS’ requirements. The final rule, and additional information on the mandatory inspection of Siluriformes fish and fish products, is available on the FSIS web site at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/siluriformes>. Questions regarding the mandatory inspection of fish of the order Siluriformes and products derived from such fish may be directed to AskFish@fsis.usda.gov.

The meetings will be held on the following dates in the specified cities:

- March 3, 2016, Newark, NJ: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm ET, Rutgers University – Newark, School of Public Affairs, The Great Hall, 15 Washington Street, Newark, N.J. 07102. For directions, please visit: <https://www.newark.rutgers.edu/directions-and-parking>.
- March 17, 2016, Los Angeles, CA: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm PT, Hilton Los Angeles Airport, 5711 W. Century Boulevard, Los Angeles, Calif.
- March 24, 2016, Houston, TX: 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm CT, Hilton Houston North, 12400 Greenspoint Drive, Houston, TX.

Sign Up for Siluriformes Fish Inspection Email Updates

Want the latest news and information about Siluriformes fish inspection? FSIS’ email subscription service is an easy way to keep up with Agency news. You can receive e-mail notifications when new Siluriformes fish inspection information is posted. You can add or delete your subscription updates at any time and you have the option to password protect your account. Register at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/subscribe>.

Food Recalls and

For information regarding recalls, please contact the Congressional and Public Affairs Staff at (202) 720-9113. You can also receive e-mail notifications when public health alerts and recalls are issued. Register at: <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/recalls>.

Follow Us On Twitter

Find food safety information for at-risk people, along with tips and resources to keep consumers and other interested groups informed of the latest agency news and events. Follow FSIS on Twitter at www.twitter.com/USDAFoodSafety.

Twitter en Español

FSIS Twitter en Español mantiene a los consumidores y otras comunidades informados de las últimas noticias y eventos de la agencia y ofrece consejos de seguridad alimentaria. Para más información visite https://twitter.com/USDAFoodSafe_es