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FSIS Constituent Update

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FSIS Finalizes Rule to Require Labeling of MTB Products

On May 13, 2015, FSIS announced new labeling requirements for raw or partially cooked beef products that have been mechanically tenderized. Consumers, restaurants, and other food service facilities will now have more information about the products they are buying, as well as useful cooking instructions so they know how to safely prepare them. These new requirements will become effective in May 2016, one year from the date of the rule's publication in the *Federal Register*.

To increase tenderness, some cuts of beef are tenderized mechanically by piercing them with needles or small blades in order to break up tissue. This process, however, can introduce pathogens from the surface of the cut to the interior, making proper cooking very important.

The potential presence of pathogens in the interior of these products means they should be cooked differently than intact cuts. FSIS is finalizing these new labeling requirements because mechanically tenderized products look no different than intact product, but it is important for consumers to know that they need to handle them differently.

Under this rule, these products must bear labels that state that they have been mechanically, blade or needle tenderized. The labels must also include validated cooking instructions so that consumers know how to safely prepare them. The instructions will have to specify the minimum internal temperatures and any hold or "dwell" times for the products to ensure that they are fully cooked.

To view the release in its entirety, visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/newsroom/news-releases-statements-transcripts/news-release-archives-by-year/archive/2015/nr-051315-01>.

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Export Requirement Updates



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

Canada
Costa Rica
Dominican Republic
French Polynesia
Guatemala
Hong Kong
Philippines
Republic of Macedonia
Singapore
Taiwan

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

NACMCF Audio Conference Call on June 10

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) will hold a meeting of the full committee via an audio conference call open to the public on June 10, 2015, from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. ET. The committee will continue to discuss, and plans to adopt, the document "Study of Microbiological Criteria as Indicators of Process Control or Insanitary Conditions."

Information about the meeting can be found at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/newsroom/meetings>. To register or to provide public comment, contact Karen Thomas-Sharp at (202) 690-6620 or at karen.thomas-sharp@fsis.usda.gov.

2014 FoodNet Report: Reduction in the Incidence of Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC) O157

USDA FSIS has been an active partner in Foodborne Diseases Active Surveillance Network, or FoodNet, since its inception in 1996. This week, FoodNet released its 2014 report, "Preliminary Incidence and Trends of Infection with Pathogens Transmitted Commonly Through Food."

The report highlights the reduction of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) O157 illness among the 10 FoodNet sites across the United States. FSIS is encouraged by this measured reduction in STEC O157:H7 and knows that our science-based approach to beef inspection and more stringent regulatory oversight of industry has played a large part in this reduction. Additionally, FoodNet is also reporting a 27 percent decrease in *Salmonella typhimurium*, one of the top six *Salmonella* serotypes that affect meat and poultry products, when compared to 2011-2013 data.

To view the report in full, as well as view the 2014 Food Safety Progress Report please visit www.cdc.gov/foodnet.

Performance Standards for *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in NRTE Comminuted Poultry Items

On Jan. 26, 2015, FSIS published a notice in the *Federal Register* to announce and request comment on new pathogen reduction performance standards for *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in raw chicken parts and not-ready-to-eat (NRTE) comminuted chicken and turkey products. On March 10, 2015, FSIS announced in the *Federal Register* that it was extending the comment period for that notice until May 26, 2015. The Agency will accept comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulation.gov> or by email at FSIS.RegulationsComments@usda.gov.

Update for other Agency verification procedures announced in the January 2015 notice:
In March, the Agency began sampling raw chicken parts to gain information on the prevalence and microbiological characteristics of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*.

In May, the Agency began exploratory sampling of raw pork products for pathogens and indicator organisms that are of public health concern and using the moving window approach to assess whether establishments meet established *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* performance standards.

The January 2015 *Federal Register* notice is available at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/b711839a-c0b9-420f-9d74-8568310a1352/2014-0023.htm?MOD=AJPERES>.

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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Economic Burden of Major Foodborne Illnesses Acquired in the United States

The USDA's Economic Research Service recently released a report, "Economic Burden of Major Foodborne Illnesses Acquired in the United States." The report provides an overview of recent estimates of the economic burden imposed annually by 15 leading foodborne pathogens in the United States. These pathogens cause over 90 percent of the illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths from foodborne illness in the U.S. and over \$15.5 billion dollars in economic burden (2013 dollars) in a typical year.

In addition, the report provides individual pathogen pamphlets that we hope will be helpful to health educators and others working on public outreach. The pamphlets include:

- A description of the course of illness that can follow an infection with the pathogen;
- A summary of information about the pathogen's annual foodborne illness incidence and economic burden relative to other foodborne pathogens;
- A disease-outcome tree diagram showing estimates of the number of people experiencing different disease outcomes from foodborne exposure to the pathogen in the United States each year; and
- A pie chart showing the annual economic burden associated with different health outcomes resulting from infection with the pathogen.

To read the 2-page report summary, or to download the complete report, go to <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/eib-economic-information-bulletin/eib140.aspx>.

FSIS Policy Updates

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

Notice 27-15, *Notification of Availability of Final HACCP Systems Validation Guideline*

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>.

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.

Tweet 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.