



FSIS Urges Consumers to Keep Clear of the Danger Zone This Summer

With the summer right around the corner, families across the country will take out their grills and start spending more time in the great outdoors. FSIS is urging everyone to remember the four simple steps to food safety - Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill - and to steer clear of the 'Danger Zone' when grilling this Memorial Day weekend.

It is important to remember that bacteria grows faster in warm temperatures, so extra care should be taken to make sure perishable food doesn't spend too long in the Danger Zone. The Danger Zone temperatures are between 40 and 140 °F when perishable food spoils rapidly. Foods that should be served hot or cold should not spend more than one hour in the Danger Zone when temperatures are above 90 °F, and two hours when temperatures are below 90 °F.

What is the Danger Zone?

The Danger Zone is the temperature range in which bacteria can grow faster. Bacteria can actually double in number in as little as 20 minutes when perishable food is kept in the Danger Zone. In order to steer clear of the Danger Zone, you should always:

- Keep cold food at or below 40 °F, in the refrigerator, in coolers, or in containers on ice.
- Limit the time coolers are open. Open and close the lid quickly. Do not leave coolers in direct sunlight.
- Keep foods served hot at or above 140 °F, in chafing dishes, warming trays, slow cookers or on the grill. You can keep cooked meats hot by setting them to the side of the grill rack, not directly over the coals where they could overcook.
- Use a food thermometer to check the safe recommended temperatures.
- Never leave food between 40 and 140 °F for more than two hours. If the temperature is above 90 °F, food should not be left out more than one hour.
- As always, we remind consumers to follow the four steps to food safety when preparing dishes for a cookout.

Clean: Make sure to always wash your hands and surfaces with soap and warm water for 20 seconds before cooking and after handling raw meat or poultry during cooking. Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and work spaces with soap and warm water too. If you plan to be away from the kitchen, pack clean cloths and moist towelettes for cleaning surfaces and hands.

Continue on Page 2

In This Issue

- 1 FSIS Urges Consumers to Keep Clear of the Danger Zone This Summer
- 1 Export Requirements
- 2 FSDZ Continues
- 2 Food Recalls and Alerts
- 3 FSIS Announces Adel A. Malak Scholarship Program
- 3 Policy Updates
- 4 FSIS to Host Webinar on Allergen Management
- 4 Follow Us On Twitter

Export Requirement Updates

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

Iraq
South Africa

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

...FSIS Urges Consumers

Continued from Page 1

Separate: When taking food off the grill, use a clean platter. Don't put cooked food on the same platter that held raw meat or poultry. Any harmful bacteria present in the raw meat juices could contaminate safely cooked food.

Cook: Always use a food thermometer to check the internal temperature of burgers, steaks, chicken, and foods containing meat or poultry:

- Hamburgers, sausages and other ground meats should reach 160 °F.
- All poultry should reach a minimum temperature of 165 °F.
- Whole cuts of pork, lamb, veal, and of beef should be cooked to 145 °F as measured by a food thermometer placed in the thickest part of the meat, and allowed to rest for three minutes before eating. A "rest time" is the amount of time the product remains at the final temperature, after it has been removed from a grill, oven, or other heat source. During the three minutes after meat is removed from the heat source, its temperature remains constant or continues to rise, which destroys pathogens.
- Fish should be cooked to 145 °F.
- Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often browns very fast on the outside, and by using a food thermometer you can be sure items have reached a safe minimum internal temperature needed to destroy any harmful bacteria that may be present.

Chill: After a cookout, place leftovers in shallow containers and refrigerate or freeze immediately. Discard food left in the Danger Zone too long. Remember, when in doubt, throw it out.

The Food Safety Discovery Zone Continues

On May 28 - 29, 2016 from 9:00 am– 5:00 pm, the USDA's Food Safety Discovery Zone (FSDZ) will be visiting the Cannon AFB Open House at 100 Air Commando Way, Clovis, NM 88103.

The FSDZ, a 40-foot interactive vehicle, educates consumers about the four food safety messages: Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill from the Food Safe Families campaign. Some of the features in the vehicle include a Hand Washing Station where visitors can learn the proper techniques to washing hands, and a cook station that showcases how to properly use a food thermometer to verify foods have been cooked to a safe internal temperature. For more information, please visit <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/usda-food-safety-discovery-zone-mobile>.

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

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Food Recalls and Alerts

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/subscribe>.

FSIS Announces Adel A. Malak Scholarship Program

FSIS is announcing the new Adel A. Malak Scholarship Program. Created to honor the memory of Dr. Adel A. Malak, a dedicated former FSIS Public Health Veterinarian (PHV), the program is looking to recruit students to crucial Public Health Veterinarian positions in the Office of Field Operations (OFO). The Adel A. Malak Scholarship is intended to reduce PHV vacancies while offering students a number of benefits.

Adel A. Malak Scholarship recipients will gain experience through a variety of Public Health Veterinarian responsibilities. Working in FSIS regulated establishments, scholars will:

- Assist in the examination of livestock and poultry for the purpose of detecting diseases or abnormalities which would render the meat unfit for human food purposes. Work with line inspectors to perform visual, tactile, and incisory inspections of heads, viscera, carcasses, and edible offal.
- Assist a program veterinarian in making dispositions on abnormal animals, carcasses, or birds retained for veterinary examination. These dispositions will include infectious diseases, neoplasms, trauma, contamination, poisonings, residues, metabolic disorders, etc.
- Assist a program veterinarian in performing activities to verify that animals are handled and treated humanely.
- Observe conditions in the establishment to ensure that sanitary conditions meet prescribed requirements.
- Observe conditions in the establishment to ensure the plant is following its Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs).

The program provides students \$15,000 for tuition and school expenses for each year in the program, paid employment during summer and school breaks, a comprehensive mentorship and professional development program, and federal benefits. After completion of their veterinary program, scholarship recipients must become an FSIS full-time employee in OFO for at least one calendar year for each school year that the student was covered by the scholarship. As part of the USDA Pathways Program, participants will have the opportunity for non-competitive conversion to a permanent appointment with FSIS' OFO upon successful completion of the program with a DVM degree, training, and other work requirements.

Interested students must apply online via www.usajobs.gov. Locate the announcement using the key words "Adel A. Malak" in the search engine under the "Student and Recent Graduates" tab. For more information go to <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/510364de-4644-4dd2-b856-96ea42d-b9ffc/32-16.pdf?MOD=AJPERES> or email Adel.A.MalakScholarship@fsis.usda.gov.

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 updates were recently issued.

Notice 33-16 - *Restricted Use of Personal and Government Furnished Electronic Devices*

Directive 1306.5 Revision 2 - *Identification and Authentication*

Directive 2300.1 - *FSIS Lincpass Light Activation Station Procedures*

Directive 7120.1 Revision 35 - *Safe and Suitable Ingredients Used in the Production of Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products*

FSIS to Host Webinar on Allergen Management, Economics of Allergen-related Recalls, and Allergen Labeling for FSIS-Regulated Products

FSIS will conduct a webinar on Tuesday, June 7, 2016, at 2:00 pm ET to discuss the updated FSIS guidance document "FSIS Compliance Guideline: Allergens and Ingredients of Public Health Concern: Identification, Prevention and Control, and Declaration Through Labeling." The guidance was recently updated and published in the Federal Register (80 FR 70747, Nov. 16, 2015). The update replaces the previous version of the document, which was published for public comment in April 2014.

This webinar will provide an overview of the FSIS guidance to assist meat and poultry establishments in addressing hazards posed by allergens in FSIS-regulated products. The guidelines provide best practice recommendations based on scientific and practical considerations. Additionally, the webinar will provide a discussion of the economics related to recalls due to undeclared allergens.

FSIS encourages meat and poultry processors to review the guidance and evaluate the effectiveness of their practices and intervention strategies in reducing the risk of undeclared allergen contamination to consumers from meat and poultry products.

The guidelines provide information on proper procedures for processing, handling, storing, and labeling a product with an allergenic ingredient or ingredient of public health concern based on three basic principles: 1) Identify; 2) Prevent and control; and 3) Declare. By following these guidelines, establishments are likely to ensure that product labels declare all ingredients and do not contain undeclared allergens or other undeclared ingredients.

The FSIS Compliance Guideline "Allergens and Ingredients of Public Health Concern" is available at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/f9cbb0e9-6b4d-4132-ae27-53e0b52e840e/Allergens-Ingredients.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS:

Step 1: Go to <http://ems7.intellor.com/login/704982>; you may join 10 minutes prior.

Step 2: Instructions for connecting to conference audio will then be presented on your computer.

If you are unable to connect to the conference by computer, you may listen by telephone only at 1-877-369-5243 or 1-617-668-3633 using 0299933#.

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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.