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FSIS Constituent Update

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Comment Period Extended for Requirements for the Disposition of Non-Ambulatory Disabled Veal Calves Proposed Rule

In response to a request from industry groups, FSIS is extending the comment period by 30 days for the *Federal Register* proposed rule "Requirements for the Disposition of Non-Ambulatory Disabled Veal Calves" (80 FR 27269; May 13, 2015). The original deadline to submit comments was July 13; the new deadline to submit comments is August 12.

FSIS is proposing to remove a provision that permits establishments to set apart and hold for treatment veal calves that are unable to rise from a recumbent position and walk because they are tired or cold (9 CFR 309.13(b)). Under the Agency's proposal, non-ambulatory disabled veal calves that are offered for slaughter would be condemned and promptly euthanized. Prohibiting the slaughter of all non-ambulatory disabled veal calves would improve compliance with the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act of 1978 (7 U.S.C. 1901 et seq.) and the humane slaughter implementation regulations. FSIS is also proposing clarifications in the regulations that all non-ambulatory disabled cattle must be promptly disposed of after they have been condemned.

Comments on the rule may be submitted online via the Federal eRulemaking Portal, available at <http://www.regulations.gov>; by mail to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Patriots Plaza III, Mailstop 3782, Room 8-163A, Washington, DC 20250-3700; or by hand or courier delivery to Patriots Plaza III, 355 E St. SW., Room 8-163A, Washington, DC 20250-3700. All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the Agency name and docket number FSIS-2014-0020.

FSIS to Implement PHR Criterion for Scheduling FSAs

FSIS uses a number of decision criteria to prioritize establishments for for-cause Food Safety Assessments (FSAs). These criterion are described in the agency's Public Health Decision Criteria Report at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/ffsis/topics/data-collection-and-reports/ffsis-data-analysis-and-reporting/data-reporting/public-health-regulations>. At the meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI) in January 2013, FSIS presented its plans to implement an FSA scheduling criterion called Public Health Regulations (PHRs). In June 2013, FSIS implemented the PHR criterion. Periodic analysis of the PHRs is one of the recommendations from the 2013 NACMPI report. This year, FSIS has analyzed the most current data and is revising the list of PHRs, as well as the cut-points used. FSIS is posting the revised FY16 list of PHRs and their corresponding cut-points on its website. The agency will implement this revised set of PHRs at the start of FY16.

In This Issue

- 1 Comment Period Extended
- 1 FSIS to Implement PHR Criterion
- 1 Export Requirements
- 2 Sourcing Egg Products
- 2 New FSA Tools for Establishments
- 2 Get Answers at AskFSIS
- 2 FSIS Testing for E. coli
- 3 NACMCF Appointments
- 3 FSIS Policy Updates
- 3 Food Recalls and Alerts
- 3 Follow Us On Twitter

Export Requirement Updates



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

Azerbaijan
Belarus
Benin
Ecuador
Singapore
United Arab Emirates

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

Sourcing Egg Products and Shell Eggs from Foreign Countries

Due to the expected shortage of egg products in the United States caused by highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in egg laying hens, many companies that use egg products are seeking information about foreign sources of egg and egg products. In response to increased interest, FSIS has released a fact sheet titled, "Sourcing Egg Products and Shell Eggs from Foreign Countries." This fact sheet details how the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) determines eligibility for egg exports to the United States. Additionally, the fact sheet also provides information regarding the roles of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) in regulating shell egg imports.

The fact sheet can be found at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/ffsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/production-and-inspection/sourcing-egg-products-shell-eggs>.

June Brings New Food Safety Assessment (FSA) Tools

On June 10, 2015, FSIS Enforcement Investigations and Analysis Officers (EIAOs) began completing Food Safety Assessments (FSA) in all establishments using revised FSA tool questions following the revision of FSIS Directive 5100.1 Enforcement, Investigations, and Analysis Officer (EIAO) Comprehensive Food Safety Assessment Methodology. The new tools are: General Tool, Poultry Tool, Meat Tool, Ready-to-eat Tool, Not Ready-to-eat Tool and Thermal Processing/ Commercially Sterile Tool.

Copies of the FSA tools are posted on FSIS' website at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/ffsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/food-safety-assessments> as related documents to FSIS Directive 5100.1. These tools were revised to eliminate redundancy; focus EIAOs on the HACCP system specifically related to food safety and to streamline the questions to allow the EIAOs to complete FSAs in 5 to 7 in-plant production days as described in the new FSA methodology in the revised directive.

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 June 14, 2015, FSIS laboratory services analyzed a total of 9,777 beef trim samples (8322 domestic and 1,455 imported), 2,689 routine follow-up samples (2575 domestic and 114 imported), and 262 non-routine follow-up/traceback samples. One-hundred and fifteen samples were found to be positive; 55 were domestic trim samples, four were imported trim samples, 52 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 non-O157 STEC, and seven 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/ffsis/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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Secretary Vilsack Appoints New Members to National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods

On June 23, Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the appointment of members to the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) for the 2015-2017 term. Established in 1988 by USDA (Food Safety and Inspection Service), the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Food and Drug Administration and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), the Department of Commerce (National Marine Fisheries Service), and the U.S. Department of Defense, NACMCF provides scientific advice on public health issues related to the safety and wholesomeness of the U.S. food supply. The committee assists in the development of microbiological criteria. In addition, it reviews and evaluates epidemiological and risk assessment data and methodologies for assessing microbiological hazards.

"NACMCF members offer invaluable insights on food safety issues," said Secretary Vilsack. "These individuals will be instrumental in protecting our nation's food supply."

Newly appointed NACMCF members are: Dr. Gary Acuff, Texas A&M University; Ms. Vanessa Coffman, Consumer Representative; Dr. Peter Feng, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration; Dr. Scott Hanna, U.S. Department of Defense; Dr. Carolyn Hovde, University of Idaho; Dr. Bala Kottapalli, ConAgra Foods Inc.; Dr. Margie Lee, University of Georgia; Dr. Tiffiani Onifade, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Dr. Laurie Post, Mars Global Chocolate; and Dr. John Ruby, JBS USA, LLC.

To view the press release in full please visit <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=2015/06/0183.xml>.

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 35-15, *PHIS Modifications in Preparation for the Implementation of Export Certification within PHIS*

FSIS Compliance Guideline, *Modernization of Poultry Slaughter Inspection - Microbiological Sampling of Raw Poultry*

Docket No. FSIS-2014-0033, *Control of Listeria monocytogenes in Ready-to-Eat Meat and Poultry Products*

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.