USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Food Safety and Inspection Service

ANNUAL PLAN

FISCAL YEAR **2020**

Protecting Public Health and Preventing
Foodborne Illness

Contents

I am proud to publish the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Annual Plan of the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). This is the fourth annual plan released under the FSIS 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. It outlines how the Agency will continue to work toward our strategic goals over the next fiscal year.

In keeping with our efforts to modernize inspection systems, business practices, and policies, much of our work for FY 2020 builds upon data collection and program evaluations completed during FY 2018 and FY 2019. We will implement science-based recommendations from program evaluations to drive sampling programs for microbiological and chemical hazards, ensure robust systems to verify humane handling, and improve how Agency directives and notices are delivered to field personnel. We will also capitalize on 2 years of consumer research studies to deliver targeted food safety messages aimed at addressing the most common unsafe food handling practices and preventing foodborne illness. The Agency will continue this systematic, data-driven approach to evaluation and modernization in FY 2020 as we take a closer look at foreign material and undeclared allergen recalls.

FSIS will continue to focus our surveillance on the processes and facilities that pose the highest risk to public health. To enhance transparency to consumers and industry, we will increase the number of establishment-specific data sets that are publicly available. Through outreach to small and very small establishments, we will provide training and resources to support small businesses in meeting food safety and humane handling requirements.

To effectively identify and respond to outbreaks of foodborne illness, we will continue to collaborate with State and Federal partners to modernize laboratory infrastructure and improve communications. As we embrace evolving science and technology, we are poised in FY 2020 to explore the use of new laboratory and information technology to quantify foodborne pathogens.

At the heart of any annual plan is its people. As we continue to work toward achieving operational excellence, it is the dedicated day-to-day work of FSIS employees that drives us closer to our public health goals and our vision that everyone's food is safe.

Carmen M. Rottenberg

Carmen M. Rottenberg
Administrator, Food Safety and Inspection Service

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AFDO	Association of Food and Drug Officials
AMR	Antimicrobial Resistance
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
APHL	Association of Public Health Laboratories
APMS	Adulterated Product Monitoring System
ARS	Agricultural Research Service
CARE	Compliance, Assistance, Review, and Evaluation
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CFP	Conference for Food Protection
CIFOR	Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response
CSI	Consumer Safety Inspector
DVMS	District Veterinary Medical Specialist
E. coli	Escherichia coli
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EEO/CR	Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
EG	Enterprise Governance
EHS-Net	Environmental Health Specialists Network
EIAO	Enforcement Investigation and Analysis Officer
ERM	Enterprise Risk Management
EWA	Early Warning Alert
EWG	Evaluation Workgroup
FDA	U.S. Food and Drug Administration
FERN	Food Emergency Response Network
FEVS	Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey
FI	Food Inspector
FoodNet	Foodborne Disease Active Surveillance Network
FSIS	Food Safety and Inspection Service
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FRIO	Financial Reporting Improvements and Optimization
FSA	Food Safety Assessment
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GCP	Good Commercial Practices
Gen-FS	Genomics for Food and Feed Safety
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point
HH	Humane Handling
HMSA	Humane Methods of Slaughter Act
HP FSWG	Healthy People Food Safety Workgroup

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HR	Human Resources
ICLN	Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks
IFORC	Interagency Foodborne Outbreak Response Collaboration
IFSAC	Interagency Food Safety Analytics Collaboration
INFAL	Inter-American Network of Food Analysis Laboratories
IPP	Inspection Program Personnel
IRAC	Interagency Risk Assessment Consortium
IT	Information Technology
Lm	Listeria monocytogenes
LMA	Labor Management Agreement
LRN	Laboratory Response Network
LSAS	Label Submission and Approval System
MASPM	Mission Area Senior Program Manager
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPI	Meat and Poultry Inspection
NACMCF	National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods
NACMPI	National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection
NARMS	National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System
NASEM	National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
NRP	National Residue Program
NRTE	Not-Ready-to-Eat
NSSE	National Special Security Events
OCFO	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
PFGE	Pulsed-Field Gel Electrophoresis
PFP	Partnership for Food Protection
PHIS	Public Health Information System
PHR	Public Health Regulation
PHRE	Public Health Risk Evaluation
PHV	Public Health Veterinarian
POE	Point-of-Entry
RRT	Rapid Response Team
RSA	Robust Systematic Approach
RTE	Ready-to-Eat
SCORE	Surveillance, Complaints, and Outbreaks Response Enterprise
SRT	Self-Reporting Tool
STEC	Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli*
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WGS	Whole Genome Sequencing

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health agency in USDA whose mission is to protect the public's health by ensuring the safety of the Nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and processed egg products. FSIS ensures food safety through the authorities of the Federal Meat Inspection Act,[1] the Poultry Products Inspection Act,[2] and the Egg Products Inspection Act,[3] as well as humane animal handling through the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act.[4]

FSIS employs approximately 9,400 employees working collectively to conduct a broad range of food safety activities to achieve FSIS' overall vision - that everyone's food is safe. FSIS employees are highly trained, motivated, and skilled professionals working as "one team with one purpose." FSIS activities contribute to USDA's FY 2018-2022 Strategic Plan in its Goal 7, Objective 7.1, "Prevent Foodborne Illness and Protect Public Health," and FY 2020 marks the fourth year of the Agency's FSIS 2017-2021 Strategic Plan.

The goals, outcomes, and objectives set forth in FSIS' FY 2017-2021 Strategic Plan directly align to the Agency's annual plans and provide an integrated framework for understanding how FSIS fulfills our mission and addresses 21st century public health challenges.

Vision: Everyone's food is safe		
Mission: Protecting the public's health by ensuring the safety of meat, poultry, and processed egg products		
	OUTCOME	OBJECTIVE
GOAL 1 Prevent Foodborne Illness and Protect Public Health	**1.1 -** Prevent Contamination **1.2 -** Limit Illness From Regulated Products	**1.1.1 -** Drive Compliance With Food Safety Statutes and Regulations **1.1.2 -** Strengthen Sampling Programs **1.1.3 -** Ensure Establishments Are Meeting Pathogen Reduction Performance Standards **1.1.4 -** Promote Food Defense Practices **1.2.1 -** Improve Food Safety at In Commerce Facilities **1.2.2 -** Enhance Response to Foodborne Illness Outbreaks and Adulteration Events **1.2.3 -** Increase Public Awareness of Recalls, Foodborne Illness, and Safe Food Handling Practices
GOAL 2 Modernize Inspection Systems, Policies, and the Use of Scientific Approaches	**2.1 -** Improve Food Safety and Humane Handling Practices Through Adoption of Innovative Approaches **2.2 -** Enhance Access to Complete and Accurate Information to Inform Decisions	**2.1.1 -** Modernize Scientific Techniques and Inspection Procedures **2.1.2 -** Increase Adoption of Humane Handling Best Practices **2.2.1 -** Improve the Reliability, Access, and Timely Collection and Distribution of Information
GOAL 3 Achieve Operational Excellence	**3.1 -** Maintain A Well-Trained and Engaged Workforce **3.2 -** Improve Processes and Services	**3.1.1 -** Improve Recruitment and Retention for Mission Critical Positions **3.1.2 -** Enhance Training and Development Opportunities Across Competency Areas **3.1.3 -** Ensure Equal Opportunity and a Diverse and Inclusive Environment **3.2.1 -** Enhance Efficiency and Effectiveness of Key Business Processes and Systems **3.2.2 -** Improve Service Delivery
ACCOUNTABLE • COLLABORATIVE • EMPOWERED • SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED		

[1] Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA, P.L. 90-492).

[2] Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA, P.L. 90-492).

[3] Egg Products Inspection Act (EPIA, P.L. 91-597).

[4] Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA, P.L. 85-765).

FSIS will implement this FY 2020 Annual Plan by utilizing its performance management framework, which includes monitoring and reporting processes underpinned by the Agency's enterprise governance (EG) process. FSIS fosters a performance-based environment with executives and senior staff assigned to regularly track and monitor progress, ensure FSIS meets intended targets, and make timely and necessary adjustments to key activities or approaches. Our annual plan this year includes a greater focus on outcome-based measures, while continuing to track other key milestones, internal controls, and outputs.

FSIS has used its EG process to present public health and other mission-related topics to executive leadership, particularly those topics that cut across programs and/or have Agencywide implications, for the purpose of collaborative decision making and implementation. All new investments, major projects, proposed policy initiatives, and major changes to existing policies go through the EG process.

Three governance boards regularly meet to deliberate, and along with their associated work groups and committees (sub-boards), provide key analysis, evaluation, and recommendations regarding program enhancements to support data driven decision making. The Agency is also integrating new Office of Management and Budget enterprise risk management (ERM) requirements into its current governance activities and structure. To this end, FSIS leveraged existing internal risk-related expertise to develop an ERM profile and will continue to work on incorporating ERM into its decision-making culture.

Outcome 1.1: Prevent Contamination

Result 1: Drive Compliance With Food Safety Statutes and Regulations

This result primarily focuses on the work of thousands of FSIS inspectors across the United States conducting daily inspection activities, both online and offline, verifying industry compliance with applicable food safety regulatory requirements, which extends to both domestically produced and imported food products.

Key areas of emphasis to drive compliance and reduce the risk of FSIS-regulated product contamination include the following:

- Conducting Public Health Risk Evaluations (PHRE) and Food Safety Assessments (FSA) to ensure regulated establishments have developed and implemented food safety systems that reduce or prevent food safety hazards.[5]
- Enhancing outreach to small and very small establishments and other domestic stakeholders about food safety requirements.
- Strengthening partnerships with and continuing review of State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) Programs.
- Ensuring an effective international equivalence process.
- Verifying the safety of exported products and that they meet foreign country requirements.

PHREs: Performing PHREs and FSAs can result in improvements to an establishment's Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system design, process controls, and/or a reduction in non-compliance that helps to reduce hazards present in food. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to perform activities to reduce non-compliance and PHREs based on public health risk determinants.

Outreach: For domestic stakeholders, including small and very small establishments, FSIS will continue to deploy innovative approaches to develop and deliver outreach regarding technical, scientific, and regulatory compliance information. This includes highlighting relevant Agency initiatives, recently published regulations, and associated industry guidelines through: monthly stakeholder meetings, industry roundtables, webinars, presentations at conferences, and individual establishment engagement.

In FY 2019, FSIS also conducted 6 roundtable discussions with more than 250 people representing at least 120 plants from across the country to engage and support small and very small establishments and dedicated approximately 9 percent of Enforcement Investigation and Analysis Officers' (EIAO) time to direct outreach at official establishments. Building on successes and lessons learned from previous years, in FY 2020, the Agency will continue the EIAO Outreach Initiative and continue hosting and participating in roundtable discussions in areas of the country with concentrations of small and very small establishments. Using feedback and lessons learned from these and other outreach efforts, FSIS will conduct topical webinars, develop new and modify existing guidelines and other industry resources, and improve and streamline information available through the FSIS Small Plant Help Desk.

[5] The PHRE is a decision-making process that FSIS uses to determine whether an FSA needs to be scheduled. It is a distinct, separate activity from an FSA. See FSIS Directive 5100.4 Rev. 1. The purpose of an FSA is to assess and analyze an establishment's food safety system to verify that the establishment is able to produce safe and wholesome meat or poultry products in accordance with FSIS statutory and regulatory requirements.

State MPI Programs: FSIS' work in the area of compliance also includes evaluation of State MPI Programs. The Agency will continue its work to ensure that the 27 States with an MPI Program maintain food safety systems "at least equal to" the FSIS food safety inspection system. As in FY 2019, FSIS will continue in FY 2020 to conduct its reviews of State self-assessment submissions and perform annual onsite audits of State MPI systems and laboratory programs. Additionally, the Agency will continue monthly correlations with State Directors and encourage increased interaction between FSIS District Offices and State MPI Programs.

Imported Products: FSIS' food safety mission also extends to ensuring, through continuous monitoring, the safety of imported products. FSIS' equivalence process ensures foreign countries that are eligible to export products to the United States maintain equivalent food safety inspection systems. This includes document review, point-of-entry (POE) reinspections of imported product, an onsite audit of each eligible country at least 36 months after the last published audit report, and outreach to the international community. In FY 2020, FSIS expects to see continued growth in the number of foreign countries seeking an equivalence determination from FSIS.

★ State MPI Program
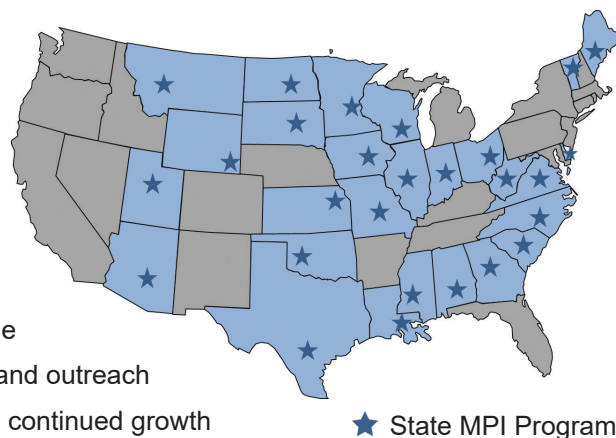
Document Review: FSIS will continue to improve the collection, monitoring, and review of documentation submitted by foreign governments regarding their food safety practices through the Self-Reporting Tool (SRT). In FY 2019, FSIS provided guidance materials to foreign countries to assist them with completing a new version of the SRT and conducted outreach on these materials by hosting five webinars that were attended by more than 70 individuals from 24 countries. In FY 2020, FSIS will develop a dashboard that will include an inventory of SRT responses and supporting documentation for each equivalent country. The dashboard will be used to track SRT completeness and to measure the impact of the new SRT, guidance materials, and technical outreach efforts over time. Additionally, FSIS will develop and implement an outreach plan to ensure completeness of documentation for foreign inspection systems, clarify equivalence verification procedures, and reduce POE violations.

POE Reinspections: Point-of-entry reinspection is one element of a three-part approach FSIS uses to evaluate and verify the ongoing equivalence of an exporting country's food safety inspection system. FSIS import reinspection sampling allocates types of inspections for product received based on country profiles that take into consideration the amenable species and volume shipped, as well as samples that are for-cause. For-cause samples can be triggered by recent violative samples, issues identified during FSIS audits in eligible countries, and/or other data or information received. FSIS continues to utilize analytics tools to identify trends of concern from data obtained through foreign country audits and POE reinspection activities to direct the Agency's annual sampling plan and support decisions on for-cause sampling initiatives.

Onsite Audits: In FY 2019, FSIS conducted 21 equivalence verification audits in 23 different countries. Additionally, FSIS auditors took a more active role in helping the USDA, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) verify Foot-and-Mouth Disease requirements in foreign countries, and in credentialing foreign countries for Level 2 eAuthentication. This provides foreign countries access to FSIS' Public Health Information System (PHIS) through which SRT documentation can be uploaded and transmitted electronically. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to provide these services for APHIS and foreign countries, in addition to providing a multi-disciplinary approach to audits by including scientists and international policy experts in the on-site audit teams.

International Outreach: FSIS will continue working with foreign counterparts to share information about FSIS regulatory requirements and about how the Agency uses the latest technology to ensure protective public health standards for food safety. Outreach will be conducted through technical assistance exchange programs, meetings with foreign government officials and organizations, educational seminars, visits to FSIS laboratories and FSIS-regulated establishments. FSIS also intends to continue reaching out to international regulatory counterparts to share best practices and technological advances for modernizing existing food safety inspection systems, and work with them to improve food safety standards and vital health protections worldwide.

Exported Products: FSIS' food safety mission extends to ensuring the safety and integrity of the approximately 17 billion pounds of FSIS-regulated product exported to more than 140 countries around the globe. In FY 2019, the Agency expanded its secure electronic export application and certification system—the PHIS export component—by an additional 21 countries. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to expand the number of countries eligible to export through the secure PHIS system and to review export systems and processes to ensure the safety of exported product and that associated documents are timely, accurate, and in compliance with foreign country requirements.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of establishments scheduled for a PHRE due to public health risk determinants other than performance standards.6 (1.1.1.1)	1.09%
Develop by FY 2020 Q1, and implement by FY 2020 Q2, an international outreach and technical consultation plan based on foreign country equivalence needs and gaps, and export priorities. (1.1.1.3)	

ANNUAL PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of international audits conducted based on FY 2020 schedule.	90%
% of planned onsite State MPI Program system audits completed.	≥ 89%
% of planned State MPI laboratory audits and reviews of State self-assessments completed.	≥ 92%

[6] This measure calculates the percentage of establishments scheduled for a PHRE due to specific public health criteria other than performance standards out of all establishments eligible for a PHRE, using PHIS as the data source. Expected performance is downward in small increments through FY 2021. The measure was modified in FY 2020 to exclude PHREs triggered by performance standards as these were not included in the original baseline for the measure.

Outcome 1.1: Prevent Contamination

Result 2: Strengthen Sampling Projects

This result focuses on optimizing FSIS' annual sampling projects to inform Agency decision making and policy. Sampling informs FSIS' performance standards, which are designed to help meet public health goals. The annual sampling plan will facilitate the gathering of knowledge on the relative risk of contamination of FSIS-regulated products. It will also continue to seek efficiencies by analyzing a single sample for multiple microbiological or chemical hazards, when possible. The FY 2020 Annual Sampling Plan was implemented on October 1, 2019, and will be publicly available by the end of October 2019. Having an effective annual sampling plan helps FSIS leverage new technology to increase precision, gain efficiencies, and better identify and characterize hazards to decrease their presence in food.

In FY 2018 and FY 2019, FSIS conducted an evaluation of its existing sampling projects to ensure, in part, that it is allocating its sampling and analytical resources as effectively as possible. The evaluation conducted was based on the overarching assumption that the principal value of sampling lies in the data generated and the use of those data to drive Agency decision making. In that evaluation, FSIS developed the following criteria which reflect how FSIS currently uses its sampling data in its decision making. Specifically, criteria include whether the sampling projects generate data to:

1. *Assess individual establishments;*
2. *Conduct investigations;*
3. *Modernize Agency policies and regulations; and*
4. *Track the Agency's progress, conduct national surveillance, and establish or support priorities.*

Through this evaluation, FSIS recognized the need for, and developed, sample planning tools to estimate the optimum number of samples necessary to achieve intended goals of each sampling project. In FY 2019, FSIS began using these tools to evaluate current sampling projects. FSIS will publish a report on this evaluation in FY 2020 and will use the results of this evaluation to modify its annual sampling plan as needed. By implementing the recommendations, FSIS will more efficiently allocate and manage sampling resources while maximizing the benefits in Agency decision making and to public health. Those modifications will also help ensure that planned samples are collected and analyzed as scheduled.

Taking into account the criteria and tools developed during the evaluation of sampling projects, the Agency is considering additional sampling projects including the following:

Beef – Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC): In FY 2019, FSIS redesigned its beef bench trim sampling project to improve collection rates. The percentages of assigned samples that were collected and tested increased from about 40 percent to about 50 percent. In FY 2020, FSIS will announce in a Federal Register Notice the expansion of its sampling and testing for non-O157 STEC to all beef products currently analyzed for *E. coli* O157:H7.

Pork – STEC: In FY 2019, FSIS continued analyzing raw intact and non-intact pork cuts and raw comminuted products for STEC. In FY 2020, FSIS will share sample enrichments with USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) for further analysis of STEC recovery.

Poultry – *Salmonella and Campylobacter:* In FY 2019, FSIS analyzed the results of its religious exempt, low volume, and mechanically separated poultry exploratory sampling projects. Based on these results, the Agency decided to discontinue its religious exempt and low volume projects in FY 2020 and is evaluating whether to also discontinue the mechanically separated poultry project. FSIS will communicate the results of those analyses and use those results to inform recommendations that will be incorporated into industry guidelines for lowering *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* contamination in these commodities. In FY 2020, FSIS will also analyze the results of the remaining poultry exploratory sampling projects and determine next steps based on that analysis.

Import Sampling: In FY 2020, FSIS is planning an evaluation of FSIS' import sampling program to ensure it is optimized to provide the best information for Agency decision making.

Residue Sampling: FSIS collaborates with the National Residue Program (NRP) by, in part, identifying priority compounds of public health concern and utilizing this information to develop FSIS' annual domestic and import residue sampling projects. In FY 2019, FSIS modernized the way in which it schedules State NRP samples to reflect production volume. FSIS intends to incorporate the FY 2020 NRP results, previously known as the Blue Book, into its FY 2020 Annual Sampling Plan. The FY 2019 NRP results, also known as the Red Book, will be posted in early FY 2020. FSIS will continue to work through its interagency partners via the Surveillance Advisory Team and the Interagency Residue Control Group meetings to develop new residue sampling priorities and projects in FY 2021, as needed.

In FY 2019, FSIS expanded its periodic monitoring survey for dioxins (and dioxin-like compounds) to include Siluriformes. FSIS also added egg products to the chemical residue surveillance program. In FY 2020, FSIS will further expand the chemical residue surveillance program by: (1) including 16 per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in muscle samples from condemned carcasses; (2) changing the sample collection point of poultry carcasses to a place prior to the application of chemical interventions, for detection of semicarbazide (SEM) as a marker for nitrofurazone residues; and (3) developing an internal procedure for addressing situations involving chemicals without established tolerances or other applicable regulatory levels, using a risk-based approach.

National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS): FSIS collaborates with its public health and food safety partners to monitor antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in bacteria. FSIS collects and analyzes samples from animal ceca and regulatory food products for bacteria that may carry AMR. In FY 2020, FSIS plans to expand NARMS sample substrates.

Sample Collection and Analysis: Consistent with the evaluation of sampling resources described under this result, FSIS will evaluate sample collection and analysis rates and how these factors affect the sampling programs' ability to meet policy objectives. Based on this evaluation, FSIS may revise the current sample allocations to better meet those policy objectives. FSIS will also work to ensure that PHIS establishment profiles accurately reflect production within an establishment, allowing the Agency to align sampling assignments with product availability, thus improving collection rates. FSIS will also assess reasons samples are discarded once received by the laboratory in order to propose options for reducing these occurrences.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of eligible poultry establishments that are categorized. (1.1.2.1)	78%

Outcome 1.1: Prevent Contamination

Result 3: Ensure Establishments Are Meeting Pathogen Reduction Performance Standards

This result focuses on using pathogen reduction performance standards to assess the food safety performance of establishments that slaughter and process poultry and meat products. FSIS performance standards are designed to help meet public health goals.

Poultry – *Salmonella:* FSIS continues to implement a data-driven regulatory strategy to improve *Salmonella* control in raw poultry slaughter and processing establishments. In FY 2019, FSIS reevaluated its original method for assessing establishment performance against the current performance standards and implemented a new categorization methodology in November 2018. The category status reported is now based on FSIS sample results during the 52-week window ending the last Saturday of the previous month, and no longer includes followup sampling results as part of the moving window when determining establishment category status. The new categorization methodology is less complex and assures that category status is more reflective of the current conditions in an establishment. In November 2018, FSIS also began posting on its website the category status of individual establishments producing raw chicken parts and not-ready-to-eat (NRTE) comminuted chicken and turkey products. Web-posting this information provides the public with tools and information to make informed food safety decisions.

Category 2 Alerts. In FY 2018, FSIS implemented a Category 2 Alert to ensure that establishments currently meeting a performance standard are aware when their *Salmonella* positive rate increases so that they can take steps to avoid falling into Category 3 status (i.e., designated as not meeting the standard). In FY 2019, FSIS assessed what percentage of establishments that received a Category 2 Alert did not subsequently exceed a performance standard. On average, with these alerts and subsequent actions by the establishment and FSIS, 87 percent of establishments that moved into Category 2 did not subsequently fail the performance standard or fall to Category 3 status. Uncategorized Establishments.

Following implementation of FSIS' new categorization methodology, the Agency observed an increase in the number of eligible establishments that could not be categorized because the minimum number of samples per window needed for categorization had not been collected. To address this issue, in FY 2019, FSIS evaluated options for increasing the number of categorized establishments and implemented sample allocation changes with the goal of increasing the percentage of eligible establishments categorized. About 28 percent of all eligible establishments, and over 38 percent of eligible establishments producing raw chicken parts, are not categorized. FSIS will continue monitoring the number of establishments categorized monthly.

Chronic and Intermittent Category 3 Establishments. In FY 2019, the Agency issued an FSIS Notice instructing Inspection Program Personnel (IPP) on how to followup at establishments which have been chronically or intermittently assigned to Category 3. In FY 2020, FSIS will further refine its strategy for followup at such establishments and will issue an industry guideline specific to reducing *Salmonella* in raw poultry which will include best practices for regaining process control and meeting the performance standards.

Changes to Followup Sampling. In FY 2019, FSIS evaluated its followup sampling strategy. Potential changes being considered on the basis of that evaluation include adjusting the timing and number of followup samples collected. While these and other potential changes are considered, FSIS has continued to conduct followup sampling in establishments that do not meet a pathogen-reduction performance standard. In addition, FSIS evaluated both followup and routine sample results for establishments producing chicken or turkey (poultry) carcasses, raw chicken parts, or comminuted poultry products and issued a revised FSIS Notice that informs IPP that FSIS will schedule no more than 1 set of 16 followup samples every 120 days.[7] In addition, FSIS provided IPP with alerts that summarize recent followup sampling results to provide the IPP with information on whether establishment pathogen results are improving. These alerts include the number of followup samples analyzed and the number of followup samples that result in a positive.

Poultry – *Campylobacter:* In FY 2019, FSIS proposed and requested comments on revised performance standards for *Campylobacter* in NRTE comminuted chicken and turkey products based on an enrichment method. The enrichment step increases the ability to find *Campylobacter* that may be on poultry by allowing for the growth and recovery of injured *Campylobacter* cells when compared with the direct plating method. In FY 2020, after considering comments received on the proposed standards, FSIS plans to finalize these performance standards. In addition, FSIS will analyze the enrichment method-based *Campylobacter* results for young chicken and turkey carcasses and raw chicken parts and develop and propose revised *Campylobacter* performance standards for these products. To assist establishments in meeting the revised performance standards, FSIS will issue an industry guideline specific to reducing *Campylobacter* in raw poultry products.

Beef – *Salmonella:* In FY 2019, to decrease *Salmonella* contamination rates in ground beef and subsequent illnesses, FSIS prepared a Federal Register Notice proposing and requesting comments on new performance standards for *Salmonella* in raw ground beef and beef manufacturing trimmings, the primary component of raw ground beef. After considering comments received on the proposed standards, FSIS plans to finalize these performance standards and implement them. FSIS will also issue an industry guideline to assist establishments in meeting these performance standards.

Pork – *Salmonella:* In FY 2019, FSIS continued its exploratory sampling and testing of raw intact and non-intact pork cuts and raw comminuted pork product for *Salmonella*. The Agency analyzed the results to inform policy development for the control of *Salmonella* in raw pork products. In FY 2020, FSIS will prepare a manuscript to report on the results of this data analysis. FSIS also plans to propose performance standards for *Salmonella* in raw intact and non-intact pork cuts and raw comminuted pork products.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of establishments that meet pathogen reduction performance standards.[8] (1.1.3.1)	87%

[7] FSIS Notice 7-19

[8] For each poultry product with a *Salmonella* performance standard, this measure is calculated by dividing the number of establishments that passed the most recent moving window (Category 1 and Category 2) by the total number of establishments that were categorized for that performance standard. (A moving window is an approach to sampling in which FSIS evaluates all samples collected over a set number of weeks from a single establishment to assess process control. As each new week is completed, the oldest week is dropped off the calculation. The "moving window" approach provides FSIS with more flexibility for scheduling sample collection at different establishments.)

Outcome 1.1: Prevent Contamination

Result 4: Promote Food Defense Practices

This result focuses on how FSIS will remain vigilant and sustain progress made in food defense and preparedness to respond to acts of intentional contamination of food. The evolving threat landscape and emerging risks demand that the Agency maintain and enhance its capability and capacity to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from all hazards. The Agency will continue to promote agency preparedness, and that of the regulated industry, to drive enhanced capabilities and capacities to respond to and recover from threats and hazards of greatest risk.

In FY 2019, FSIS continued implementing a multi-year strategy for food defense. This included conducting food defense tasks at establishments and analyzing task data to inform program activities; continued integration of food defense into FSIS policies; implementation of its Outreach and Communication Plan to better direct food defense outreach activities; and collaboration with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and other agencies and organizations.

In addition, the Agency initiated its second annual application of the Vulnerability Assessment Framework, a risk-based approach FSIS is using to determine if new or updated vulnerability assessments are needed based on new and emerging threats. Additionally, preparedness activities included the launch of version 2.0 of the FSIS Incident Management System, providing the Agency a more stable system to efficiently manage and track incidents in real-time, exercises to validate response and recovery plans, and continued implementation of food defense-targeted threat surveillance at National Special Security Events (NSSE).

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue its work in aligning and integrating key food defense concepts and activities into day-to-day inspection operations and will continue to update critical food defense policies and resources, as needed. By conducting food defense surveillance activities in regulated establishments and in-commerce facilities, the Agency will continue to identify food defense practices in use. FSIS will also continue to conduct vulnerability assessment activities to identify critical risks and the best practices to reduce them.

Also, in FY 2020, FSIS will continue to seek out and enhance collaborative opportunities with stakeholders. These activities will include providing information to public and private partners to emphasize the importance of food defense and highlight tools and resources available on the FSIS website, providing support to foreign governments to protect the supply of food imported into the United States, and publishing food defense articles in multiple sources.

FSIS will also continue to improve capabilities to respond to and recover from any hazards through preparedness activities, including conducting analyses of food incidents to prioritize Agency efforts and conducting exercises to validate response and recovery plans and to minimize negative public health and economic impacts. Food Emergency Response Network (FERN) laboratories will continue to perform surveillance testing of food at the cooperative agreement laboratories by analyzing samples from retail for various chemical, biological, and radiological agents that the FSIS Field Services do not have the in-house capability to run. This testing program enables the FERN Cooperative Agreement labs to strengthen their readiness capabilities in response to a food defense event in support of FSIS regulated commodities.

In addition, the Agency will continue to promote preparedness by engaging in National Special Security Events (e.g., Presidential Inauguration) and Special Security Events (e.g., Super Bowl) as appropriate in FY 2020, while implementing updated vulnerability assessments and a normalized food defense sampling strategy to drive the enhanced capabilities and capacities for all food defense practices.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of establishments that maintain food defense practices.[9] (1.1.4.1)	85%

ANNUAL PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
# of surveillance testing samples at Food Emergency Response Network (FERN) Cooperative Agreement Laboratories performed.	5,500

[9] In FY 2017, FSIS revised the food defense task for IPP, which resulted in the establishment of a baseline of the percent of FSIS-regulated establishments that voluntarily maintain food defense practices as the basis of this measure.

Outcome 1.2: Limit Illness From Regulated Products

Result 5: Improve Food Safety at In-Commerce Facilities

Proper handling of meat, including Siluriformes fish, poultry, shell egg, and egg products at in-commerce facilities—warehouses, distributors, and retailers—is critical to preventing foodborne illnesses. Product volumes at some of these facilities can be very high, and the way products are handled or even further processed at some of these facilities can introduce additional food safety hazards. FSIS focuses its surveillance, investigations, enforcement, and other in-commerce activities on those facilities that present the greatest risk to consumers.

FSIS conducts followup surveillance activities at in-commerce facilities where conditions have been observed that could lead to unsafe products. FSIS also promotes safe food handling practices at in-commerce facilities through outreach and education. FSIS collaborates with State and local authorities to ensure, to the extent possible, that all types of in-commerce facilities are routinely monitored and that educational and outreach materials are disseminated as widely as possible.

In FY 2019, FSIS continued to distribute several thousand Retail Deli Best Practices brochures to retailers across the country while performing surveillance activities to verify food safety at in-commerce facilities. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to conduct the majority of its surveillance activities at the in-commerce business types that pose the highest risk to public health. The Agency will also continue to perform followup surveillance activities at in-commerce facilities where initial surveillance reveals food safety violations and take product control actions when appropriate and necessary to remove unsafe food from commerce.

Additionally, in FY 2020, FSIS will modify its current approach for targeting surveillance by adding compliance history as a risk factor for scheduling surveillance reviews. Compliance history will be identified by risk status (high, medium, low) for every facility, regardless of tier. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to verify that retail locations that operate delis are safely handling ready-to-eat (RTE) meat and poultry products intended for sale to consumers to mitigate contamination with *Listeria monocytogenes (Lm)*. *Lm* is associated with a significantly higher fatality rate than most other foodborne pathogens. It can survive and grow at cool temperatures, including during refrigeration, and can persist in retail deli environments.

The Agency will continue to focus on educating retailers and tracking progress on the adoption of safe-handling practices at retail delis. FSIS will also continue to collect and analyze surveillance data to assess the effectiveness of its efforts at retail. As part of these efforts, the Agency will assess the percentage of retailers following each of the eight most important recommendations individually and develop outreach materials targeted on the recommendations that retailers are less likely to follow.

Additionally, FSIS plans to work with FDA and other public health partners, including State and local health departments, to develop specific outreach materials for retailers, based on findings from the focus group sessions described in Result 16. FSIS also plans to find new ways to share its retail *Lm* surveillance data, including posting this information on the recently developed FSIS Retail Guidance web page.

In addition to the control of *Lm* at retail delis, FSIS continues to identify other food safety priorities at retail/in-commerce facilities and perform surveillance activities focused on these priorities. Specifically, FSIS is verifying that grinding log records are maintained at retail stores that grind raw beef products. Maintenance of these records is critical to FSIS' ability to accurately trace the source of foodborne illness outbreaks involving ground beef products and identify source materials that may need to be recalled. Despite the retail grinding log rule and FSIS issuing Notice of Warning letters to facilities that are not in compliance with grinding log recordkeeping requirements, inadequate grinding logs and poor grinding practices have continued to hinder traceback in ground beef-related outbreak investigations.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to monitor compliance with the grinding log recordkeeping requirements, educate retailers on the rule, conduct targeted outreach to retail industry organizations that can share information with their members, and issue Notice of Warning letters when violations of the rule are identified. In addition, in FY 2020, FSIS will continue working with the Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO), through a relationship initiated in FY 2019, to develop and disseminate guidance that includes best practices to assist retailers that grind raw beef products in complying with relevant regulations and mitigate hazards. This will include development of an infographic and a presentation with best practices that will be posted on the FSIS Retail Guidance web page and referenced on the AFDO website.

FSIS serves in an advisory role on the Executive Board for the Conference for Food Protection (CFP) and, in this capacity, recommends changes to the FDA Food Code that are relevant to the safety of meat and poultry products in-commerce. In FY 2019, FSIS continued to collaborate through the CFP to develop guidelines for roaster pigs. Additionally, in response to numerous outbreaks of illness linked to chicken liver prepared at restaurants, FSIS created resources in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help prevent chicken liver-associated illness. These materials were posted on the FSIS Retail Guidance web page and include findings from a published outbreak review, an intervention guideline for FSIS-regulated establishments and the foodservice industry, and an infographic for chefs, cooks, and caterers.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue working with FDA during monthly meetings to harmonize language between FSIS regulations and the FDA Food Code. The Agency will also work with FDA and CDC to develop a strategy to include its retail deli surveillance data in the Healthy People 2030 goals.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of retailers following all eight of the most important FSIS Deli *Lm* guidelines.[10] (1.2.1.1a)	63%
% of retailers following the majority of the 33 recommendations in the FSIS Deli *Lm* guidelines. (1.2.1.1b)	92%

ANNUAL PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of surveillance activities that are at the highest risk firms.	≥ 70%

[10] This measure tracks the percentage of retailers that are following all eight of the most important retail deli *Lm* guidelines. These 8 are among the 33 recommendations in the measure that follows (1.2.1.1 b). The large difference between the targets is in part because all eight need to be followed to be counted in the percentage. Measure 1.2.1.1b with a 92% target reflects an aggregate of recommendations being followed that are weighted equally. The recommendations cover product handling, cleaning and sanitizing, facility and equipment controls, and employee practices.

Outcome 1.2: Limit Illness From Regulated Products

Result 6: Improve Response to Foodborne Illness Outbreaks and Adulteration Events

FSIS collaborates with public health partners, including CDC, FDA, and State and local departments of health and agriculture, to respond to foodborne illness outbreaks and food adulteration events. Timely information exchange between partners facilitates rapid response. Evidence from consumer complaints, foodborne illness reporting systems, case-patient interviews, product traceback/traceforward, in-plant investigations and assessments, and food testing is essential for identifying and controlling foodborne illnesses and food adulteration events, including foreign material and undeclared allergens.

FSIS encourages public health partners to promptly notify FSIS of foodborne outbreaks and conducts outreach to enhance collaborative outbreak response. To inform and prioritize outreach efforts, FSIS has conducted annual surveys of public health partners since FY 2017. FSIS has also worked with partners to identify ways to prevent future illnesses and improve response and has posted lessons learned from outbreak investigations in reports on its website. Based on the survey results and lessons learned, FSIS has taken several actions, including establishing a process for sharing information with partners to assist with outbreak vehicle identification and publishing recommendations for how to include FSIS in State outbreak response procedures.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to improve response to foodborne outbreaks and food adulteration events. Specifically, FSIS will continue conducting surveys of State partners to identify ways to strengthen communication and collaboration during outbreak response. FSIS will also routinely conduct outbreak after-action reviews to identify and communicate lessons learned from outbreak investigations to help prevent foodborne illnesses and enhance outbreak response. FSIS also plans to review and update, as appropriate, its policy for assessing and using results from non-FSIS laboratories to support FSIS actions during foodborne illness response. Furthermore, to expedite the assessment process, FSIS plans to enhance instructions for State partners that submit analytical packages to FSIS. In addition, FSIS will continue to utilize advances in technology, such as whole genome sequencing (WGS) analysis, to better understand and respond to foodborne pathogens.

Also in FY 2020, FSIS will review foreign material and undeclared allergen recalls over the past several years and, based on the findings, retool existing strategies to decrease the frequency of these types of food adulteration events. These comprehensive reviews will include assessing the effectiveness of actions taken to address foreign materials and undeclared allergens. It is envisioned that multi-pronged strategies will be needed—strategies that involve education, outreach, and additional guidance for industry, as well as updated training and instructions for IPP.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of State partners that indicate that they routinely notify FSIS of illness outbreaks that may be associated with FSIS-regulated products.[11] (1.2.2.1)	80%

[11] This measure is based on responses to the annual FSIS foodborne illness outbreak investigation survey of public health partners (see Federal Register Notice – August 14, 2018) and outbreak-related information received from state agencies.

Outcome 1.2: Limit Illness From Regulated Products

Result 7: Increase Public Awareness of Recalls, Foodborne Illness, and Safe Food-Handling Practices

FSIS continues to increase public awareness of recalls, foodborne illness policies, and safe food-handling practices through a broad range of communications channels with the goal of reducing the rates of foodborne illness. The Agency will continue strategic outreach through traditional media, social media, events, partnerships, educational materials, mobile applications, seasonal outreach, conference participation, and other forms of public engagement. This outreach communicates the importance of safe food handling, informs the public of current recalls and public health alerts, and educates them about important policy modernization efforts that affect their food.

In FY 2019, the Agency completed its second year of a multi-year social science research effort using observational studies and focus groups to examine food-handling practices of consumers in the kitchen. The insights gained from this research allow FSIS to better understand how consumers handle and prepare food, and when the most unsafe food-handling practices occur during meal preparation. With this newfound information, FSIS began communicating to the public about the riskiest food safety practices and will continue to do so in FY 2020.

In FY 2020, FSIS will expand its proactive outreach efforts to the press, will continue to work with partners to serve as message multipliers to extend and expand the reach of food safety messaging, and will engage with the public and key stakeholders through traditional and new media. By refining outreach materials based on insights gained from recent research, FSIS will reach more consumers with actionable and tested safety messages to increase public awareness of recalls, foodborne illness and safe food-handling practices, and promote positive behavior change. Additional key activities for FY 2020 include researching possible updates to the Safe Handling Instructions label required on all raw and RTE FSIS-regulated products.

FSIS will promote the Agency as a science-based, 21st century public health institution by presenting its outreach strategies with partners and other stakeholders. Other key activities will include executing policy-related communications strategies that educate the public about important policy modernization efforts that affect their food; training a limited number of field staff to serve as spokespeople during local interviews and food demonstrations; and providing better customer service via user experience improvements to the Agency's website.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% increase in public awareness of safe food-handling guidance and recalls through communications channels.[12] (1.2.3.1)	5%
% of total yearly outreach target from all communications channels is based on safe food-handling behaviors research.[13] (1.2.3.2)	50%

[12] This indexed measure includes weighted metrics primarily of impressions, including direct connections, website traffic, application downloads, event participation, physical and digital educational material distribution, social media engagement, media impressions, and emails distributed. The percentage represents more than 50 million weighted impressions as its target for FY 2020

[13] This measure is a subset of the index measure used in 1.2.3.1. This measure tracks the component of our overall public outreach that applies the lessons learned from consumer research to improve our messages (50 percent of the 50 million increase in measure 1.2.3.1.).

Outcome 2.1: Improve Food Safety and Humane Handling Practices Through Adoption of Innovative Approaches

Result 8: Modernize Scientific Techniques and Inspection Procedures

This result focuses on identifying, developing, and implementing innovative tools, techniques, methodologies, and approaches to support the Agency's continued modernization efforts. More specifically, advanced tools for WGS analysis will be used to inform risk management and regulatory decisions; new pathogen screening platforms have been deployed in FSIS laboratories and will be used to gain efficiencies by, in part, reducing false negatives and positives; innovative inspection tools will be explored through pilot projects; and new and innovative methodologies will be implemented to modernize inspection systems and improve hazard detection and response. This result includes a focus on enhancing PHIS functionalities and data system interoperability. In addition to PHIS, FSIS will also modernize critical laboratory information technology (IT) infrastructure to support all applications including WGS and the new pathogen screening platforms.

One goal of modernization is to provide our inspectors, EIAOs, and regulatory partners with the information they need to support timely decision making, so this is another focus area for this result. Additionally, key activities in this result aim to reduce consumer risks by systematically controlling and preventing hazards associated with FSIS-regulated products using modernized inspection procedures and practices, new technology, and science-based regulatory requirements.

Whole Genome Sequencing: In FY 2019, the Agency used WGS to characterize pathogen isolates from regulatory samples, including *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Lm*, and STEC. In addition, FSIS used WGS to characterize all *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, and select *E. coli* and *Enterococcus* isolated from the NARMS cecal samples and *Salmonella* isolated from USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) school lunch samples. As of April 2019, FSIS discontinued all routine pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE) analyses and now uses WGS.

FSIS also plans to perform cluster analysis to identify outbreaks for pathogens, such as *Salmonella*. In addition, the Agency has drafted a set of "frequently asked questions" to help FSIS communicate this policy and other information about WGS within and outside the Agency.

For *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter*, FSIS will continue to broaden its application of WGS in its regulatory framework to further inform inspection. Specifically, FSIS will explore the use of WGS analyses, in combination with other existing techniques, to develop a risk-ranking process to determine when subtyping results for isolates from an establishment should trigger a PHRE or be used to further distinguish Category 3 establishments. In addition, WGS will be used to identify STEC serotypes and Shiga toxin (stx) and intimin (eae) subtypes associated with historical and current food isolates and investigate trends by time, product type, and establishment to enhance FSIS' knowledge of STEC characteristics and to inform policy.

In FY 2019, FSIS began including serotype, PFGE, WGS, and AMR information in its establishment-specific datasets that are posted on the FSIS website. FSIS intends to begin sharing this information more quickly with industry. FSIS also began sharing *Lm* WGS information using CDC nomenclature for the samples it analyzes in quarterly letters provided to all official establishments. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to communicate WGS information to inspectors, establishments, and industry and consumer stakeholder groups. In addition, FSIS will continue to work with FDA and other partners to develop a standardized approach for sharing WGS data and analyses for dual jurisdiction establishments; this will be addressed through an update to an existing FSIS-FDA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Dual Jurisdiction Establishments.

Laboratory Screening for Pathogens and Chemicals in FSIS Samples: For over a decade, FSIS had used a specific platform and methodology for screening microbiological samples that are enriched. While this approach had been reliable and robust, there have been several developments in the field of pathogen detection and screening. In FY 2019, FSIS incorporated three new platforms for *Salmonella*, *Lm*, and STEC into its routine screening to complement current technology and updated the relevant methodologies in the Microbial Laboratory Guidebook to reflect the use of these new platforms.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to explore technologies with improved efficiencies over direct plating and traditional most probable number (MPN) methods to quantify bacteria including *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Lm*, STEC, and indicator organisms. FSIS will work with the FDA to expand the products eligible for NARMS testing to gather additional scientific information about AMR. FSIS will also explore the potential use of diagnostic metagenomics technologies to identify multiple strains of pathogens and indicator organisms at the same time during the initial sample screening stage.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to explore new innovative laboratory equipment and methods for the detection of chemical contaminants and drug residues. Specifically, FSIS will complete a method extension validation for allergen detection in FSIS regulated products and evaluate this method for use in FSIS inspection verification activities. In FY 2020, FSIS will also complete validation and implement enhancements to its multi-residue method, which will increase the number of residues analyzed and confirmed, include quantification capability, and will extend the applicability of the method to additional product matrices, including egg products. FSIS will implement a new pesticide method designed to reduce extraction time, increase the detection capabilities for additional EPA-priority compounds, and decrease hazardous chemical usage in FSIS laboratories. Finally, FSIS plans to expand the voluntary Accredited Laboratory Program (ALP) to include pathogen testing.

Potential Inspector/EIAO Tools: In FY 2018, FSIS reviewed the laboratory evaluation of three portable water activity meters. In FY 2019, based on that evaluation, FSIS selected one of the meters to conduct in-field testing at RTE establishments producing cooked country-cured ham products; these ham products were previously associated with an outbreak. The protocol for the in-field testing was developed in FY 2019. In FY 2020, FSIS will complete the in-field testing of the selected water activity meter and determine whether the portable device can or cannot be used in-field to obtain an accurate water activity reading to assess the safety of meat products.

In FY 2020, the Agency will continue to explore real-time microbiological and allergen testing tools for field application. Tools of interest would be those that detect allergens in product or on equipment, and those that assist with the detection of fecal contamination. In addition, FSIS will continue to explore innovative tools and technology to inform environmental sample site selection based on indications of sanitary conditions. FSIS is always looking for alternatives for evaluating the effectiveness of process control, and for identifying conditions that may lead to cross-contamination of product during slaughter and processing. In FY 2020, FSIS will design a protocol to identify and assess alternatives to the destructive N60 sample collection methods and explore and identify new technologies to modernize sample transport to laboratories.

In FY 2019, FSIS completed the development of the Adulterated Products Monitoring System (APMS) functionality, which will replace the legacy System Tracking *E. coli* O157:H7 Positive Suppliers, Recall Management, and Industry Notification of Adulteration. In FY 2020, FSIS intends to launch the APMS functionality into PHIS.

Inspection Procedures and Approaches: In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to monitor the percentage of establishments whose Public Health Regulation (PHR) noncompliance rate decreases below the early warning cut point 120 days after receiving an Early Warning Alert (EWA). FSIS continues to develop reports and interactive data-driven graphics to assess individual establishment performance over time. These tools will assist the Agency in at least two ways: (1) to identify establishments that need further assistance or where regulatory action may be warranted and (2) to inform policy decisions when addressing specific food safety concerns.

Modernized Inspection Systems and Processes: FSIS will continue to modernize inspection procedures and develop new approaches to assess the industry's control of hazards. Specifically, FSIS will continue to implement the New Poultry Inspection System (NPIS) in poultry slaughter establishments that opt in and are ready to adopt the new system. This modernized slaughter inspection system is designed to facilitate pathogen reduction in poultry products by providing for more efficient and effective carcass-by-carcass inspection. This modernized inspection system allows some of the Agency's online inspection resources in slaughter establishments to be used to perform additional offline inspection activities that are more effective in ensuring food safety.

In FY 2019, FSIS continued its efforts to modernize additional inspection systems by finalizing and implementing the rule titled Modernization of Swine Slaughter Inspection and will continue these efforts in FY 2020 by finalizing the amendments to the Egg Products Inspection regulations. The Modernization of Swine Slaughter Inspection final rule creates a new optional inspection system for market hog slaughter establishments - New Swine Slaughter Inspection System (NSIS) - that will provide public health protection at least equivalent to the existing traditional inspection system for swine. In addition, the final rule requires all swine slaughter establishments to develop written sampling plans tailored to their specific operations, collect carcass samples at a specific frequency and at two specific locations, and test for an indicator organism of their choice to assure process control throughout the entire slaughter and dressing operations.

The proposed amendments to the Egg Products Inspection regulations require official plants that process egg products to develop HACCP systems (including the hazard analysis, HACCP plan, Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures, and prerequisite programs) and to meet other sanitation requirements consistent with the meat and poultry regulations. Under a HACCP system, egg products plants will be able to tailor a food safety system that best fits their facility and equipment. Furthermore, by removing prescriptive regulations, egg products plants will have the flexibility and the incentive to innovate new means to achieving enhanced food safety. FSIS will issue industry guidelines specific to each of these final rules intended to assist small and very small establishments and plants in complying with the new requirements.

In FY 2019, FSIS defined and applied criteria for and approved additional line speed waivers for poultry establishments and began accepting waivers in preparation for modernizing beef slaughter inspection. In FY 2020, FSIS will assess data from poultry line speed waivers to determine if rulemaking is appropriate. In addition, FSIS will develop criteria for waiver submissions for swine and beef slaughter inspection and announce the criteria in the Federal Register.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to modernize its import-export systems. More specifically, FSIS will continue to expand its PHIS export module to include other countries and additional products. The PHIS export module includes the electronic export application and certification systems and eliminates the need for inspectors to fill out these forms manually. FSIS will develop a proof of concept for blockchain management as a potential mechanism for addressing export certification challenges and identifying greater efficiencies in the export certification process. FSIS will also modernize its process for supporting and overseeing foreign audits of the U.S. meat, poultry, and egg products inspection systems. In FY 2019, FSIS developed an Import Library, which provides a publicly available list of foreign establishments and their eligibility status to export products to the United States. In FY 2020, FSIS will expand the Import Library to include eligible species and process categories.

In FY 2020, FSIS will also continue to enhance and modernize its labeling evaluation and processing system. This will include expanding the categories of labels that can be generically approved through rulemaking, deploying innovative approaches to improve the label evaluation process, and making improvements to the Label Submission and Approval System (LSAS) itself. To improve the label evaluation process, FSIS will continue to provide label tips in the Constituent Update and conduct outreach through webinars and presentations on new labeling policies. Improvements to the LSAS will be completed through bug fixes and enhancements to the system. These improvements will, in part, allow establishments to receive feedback on their label applications submitted for approval, thus enabling timelier label approvals.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of establishments whose PHR noncompliance rate decreases below the early warning cut point 120 days after receiving an EWA.[14] (2.1.1.2)	74%

ANNUAL PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
Develop and disseminate at least three outreach/educational materials via the FSIS website and at four venues to enhance stakeholder communications related to WGS.	4
# of days in label evaluation cycle-time, through targeted outreach and LSAS enhancements.	10 DAYS
% of import and export certificate transactions that occur electronically.	

[14] This measure is calculated as the percent of establishments receiving a PHR EWA whose PHR noncompliance rate is below the lower threshold for receiving an EWA 120 days after receiving the alert.

Outcome 2.1: Improve Food Safety and Humane Handling Practices Through Adoption of Innovative Approaches

Result 9: Increase Adoption of Humane Handling Best Practices

This result focuses on livestock slaughter using humane methods, with a specific focus on restraint and/or stunning of livestock to improve establishment compliance with the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act (HMSA) and reduce the risk of humane handling (HH) incidents at slaughter establishments. FSIS will continue to communicate and train staff on these important requirements.

A new task was created and deployed in PHIS that directs Public Health Veterinarians (PHV) to perform monthly assessments to determine if establishments slaughtering livestock have a Robust Systematic Approach (RSA) to HH and whether establishments slaughtering poultry have adopted Good Commercial Practices (GCP). During FY 2019, FSIS assessed the results of this PHIS task and found no major change in determinations from month to month. The evaluation also indicated that the RSA is also checked by IPP and the District Veterinary Medical Specialist (DVMS) through other tasks. Based on this evaluation, the Agency plans to continue to collect data and use it to design a risk-based approach for HH verification visits which would, in part, allow the Agency to better focus its resources and efforts on higher risk establishments.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue implementing its education and outreach strategy on HH best practices. This strategy has recently been redesigned and enhanced to target small and very small establishments. The HH education and outreach strategy was developed to ensure more consistent application of HH best practices and compliance with the HH regulatory requirements in the HMSA. In addition, the strategy includes education and outreach to small and very small poultry establishments on GCPs. The Agency believes that focusing HH outreach on small and very small establishments will be more effective in supporting compliance with the HMSA. Specifically, targeted HH outreach visits will be conducted at small and very small establishments by the DVMS team. These visits will be performed according to an established outreach plan that now includes a focus on preventing multiple stun events that, in the past, have resulted in FSIS enforcement actions at these small and very small establishments. By targeting outreach in this manner, FSIS believes small and very small establishments will be able to perform effective stunning and thus comply with the HMSA. In addition, eligible establishments that slaughter, regardless of size, will also continue to receive verification visits conducted by the DVMS team. During these regular verification visits, DVMSs assess how an establishment's systematic approach to handling animals humanely is functioning. The conduct of both verification and outreach visits at small and very small establishments should serve to strengthen the Agency's overall HH program nationwide. A new HH measure was created to quantify the outreach visits to small and very small plants and verification visits for all eligible slaughter establishments and is presented below.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of all eligible slaughter establishments that DVMSs visit and perform outreach or verification activities.[15] (2.1.2.2)	70%

[15] Outreach visits will target small and very small plants with a focus on effective humane handling and good commercial practices.

Outcome 2.2: Enhance Access to Complete and Accurate Information To Inform Decisions

Result 10: Improve the Reliability, Access, and Timely Collection and Distribution of Information and Data

This result focuses on improvements that will enable FSIS employees and external stakeholders to more easily access and apply Agency information and data. Improvements in the content, format, and delivery of information facilitate more consistent implementation and better understanding of policy by both field employees and industry. Leveraging technology by developing and enhancing systems and tools (1) facilitates interagency coordination and the timely distribution of information among Agency employees and the public and (2) equips analysts with ways to synthesize large volumes of data and present quality analyses for informed and sound regulatory decision making and policy development.

In FY 2019, FSIS made several additions and enhancements to the Analytics Portal, including the implementation of four new dashboards and enhancements to the Residue Violator Tracking System user interface, to improve data accuracy, processing, and reporting. FSIS also piloted an operational search with a data visualization function in the Analytics Portal, which will be implemented in FY 2020.

In FY 2020, FSIS will develop an FSIS Evaluation Plan to ensure that Agency programs (sampling projects, inspection programs, guidance documents, outreach, etc.) have an evidence-based means to assess that program's effectiveness at achieving its intended outcome. The FSIS Evaluation Plan will help ensure that the data the Agency plans to collect meets a specific purpose and will be analyzed at an appropriate frequency to support Agency rulemaking, policy development, and/or outreach efforts. Such analyses can serve as an indicator as to whether current policies are being implemented or communicated as anticipated and are working as designed. In addition, FSIS will develop a plan, and implement the necessary steps, to assess data quality in PHIS. This will help inform changes to PHIS and other data platforms.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue sharing key datasets and reports. In FY 2019, FSIS posted four new datasets on the establishment-specific microbiological sampling results for raw chicken parts, raw comminuted chicken products, raw comminuted turkey products, and raw poultry followup sampling. In FY 2019, FSIS also expanded the existing establishment-specific laboratory sampling results datasets on the web by adding serotype, PFGE, WGS, and AMR information. In FY 2020, FSIS will build on its library of datasets and has plans to add four more establishment-specific datasets. Sharing these data and quality information on an ongoing basis facilitates transparency and allows FSIS to better engage with its stakeholders.

In addition, FSIS plans to develop master datasets to allow for more consistency in reporting and analyses by FSIS analysts. These datasets will combine information from multiple data sources and tables within FSIS to ensure that all analysts are using the same core data to run analyses. In addition, the Agency will continue developing a method to receive and analyze data from external sources. As part of this process, FSIS will consider modernizing PHIS to receive and incorporate third-party data from State MPI and accredited laboratories, and other non-FSIS data.

FSIS will also consider modernizing and migrating surveillance and investigation databases into PHIS within the Surveillance, Complaints, and Outbreaks Response Enterprise (SCORE) interface and developing an integrated geographic information system for SCORE modules. FSIS also expects to implement automated data quality checks in the PHIS data flow to verify the integrity of reported results and enhance consistency across the Agency's data systems. FSIS will also standardize nomenclature, units of measurement, and interpretation of laboratory data and create a data dictionary for more efficient analyses.

In FY 2018 and FY 2019, FSIS conducted an internal evaluation of the delivery and usefulness of directives and notices that provide instructions to FSIS' field organization, including its IPP. Specifically, the evaluation included an internal survey of a subset of the Agency's field employees to gain a better understanding of how directives and notices are received in the field and whether they are understandable. In addition, those surveyed were asked how the instructions in directives and notices could be improved upon to make them more useful and understandable. In FY 2020, FSIS will implement recommendations from this evaluation including, in part: incorporating the use of short webinars and/or videos, quick summaries, and interactive tools in directives and notices and establishing a Policy Advisory Group consisting of field managers to provide input early in the process when the Agency is developing new directives and notices. In FY 2020, FSIS also plans to continue to create interactive tools that provide establishment-specific history and relevant instructions from directives and notices specific to an establishment's processes for IPP and other field employee use.

In FY 2019, FSIS launched a redesigned Guidance Index web page that is more user-friendly. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to publish guidelines to assist industry in complying with FSIS laws and regulations and plans to conduct an analysis on the impact of its guidance documents on achieving their intended purpose.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue its efforts for more employees to gain online access to FSIS-approved systems. To accomplish this, access requires new and existing employees to have updated credentials (LincPass) wherever they are assigned. The online access to equipment will reduce the Agency's dependency on paper-based processes by increasing the availability and use of electronic devices, and by improving access to FSIS training materials, data reports, and other information on the FSIS intranet, including financial and policy documents.

FSIS implemented a pilot program in three locations in the first quarter of FY 2019 to test a new method for obtaining eAuthorization and LincPass for employees within their first week on the job through the e-Onboarding program. Existing employees who are long distances from their district office are sent to their nearest credentialing center. The pilot program proved to be a success. As a result, in FY 2020, FSIS will implement the adjusted method Agency-wide and has placed LincPass credentialing stations in each district office.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
# of master FSIS datasets developed and available for use by FSIS analysts. (2.2.1.1)	2
% of employees that have online access to FSIS-approved systems. (2.2.1.2)	92%
# of establishment-specific or other FSIS datasets made publicly available (one new data set per quarter). (2.2.1.3)	19

Outcome 3.1: Maintain a Well-Trained and Engaged Workforce

Result 11: Improve Recruitment and Retention for Mission-Critical Positions

This result primarily focuses on continuing to implement an expanded set of strategies, incentives, and initiatives that will advance our mission-critical hiring objectives and improve retention, including for hard-to-fill locations. It also focuses on recruitment initiatives for specific populations, such as veterinarians, food inspectors, veterans, and IT professionals to support FSIS' ability to maintain a highly qualified and diverse workforce. A large majority of FSIS' workforce play a critical role in providing day-to-day oversight of food inspection operations.

These strategies help reduce the inherent risks the Agency faces by ensuring that enough inspectors are in place to conduct inspection activities to prevent FSIS-regulated product contamination and ensure that animals are treated humanely before they are slaughtered.

In FY 2019, FSIS utilized its direct hiring authority to expedite the hiring of PHVs. In FY 2020, FSIS plans to execute the following initiatives:

- A pre-apprenticeship program for Food Inspectors (FI) and Consumer Safety Inspectors (CSI) to attract service members, who desire to continue their career after the military, in the food safety arena. This program utilizes a 4-week familiarization process that trains service members while still on active duty. The groundwork has been laid so that the pre-apprenticeship program will transition participants to the FSIS formal Apprenticeship Program.
- An original, 12-month apprenticeship (registered with the Department of Labor) for FI and CSI occupations to create a pipeline of candidates with previous food safety military experience to fill vacancies in hard-to-fill locations.
- A retention program that enables the Agency to employ incentives, focused on PHVs, which would require continued Federal service agreements to improve long-term career opportunities. Additionally, the Agency will further develop and implement the multipronged PHV incentive program to improve PHV staffing.
- Enhancements to the Human Resource General Support System to enable better position tracking, improved hiring metrics calculations, and report development. These metrics and reports will identify and address bottlenecks to improve the hiring process.
- Monthly Supervisory Veterinary Medical Officer announcements identifying current vacancy locations to increase applicant acceptance of job offers.
- Outreach to colleges and universities with veterinary, food, and animal science programs to educate students about the FSIS mission as well as to promote FSIS as an employer of choice.
- Local FI hiring events, with district staff and human resources (HR) personnel onsite to provide support to increase applicants' completion of the application and pre-employment processes.
- The Office of Management and the Office of Field Operations will partner with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to update the FI assessment tool to more effectively screen applicants by avoiding unrelated questions and including some experience and education questions.

GOAL 3: Achieve Operational Excellence

- The Veterinary Medical Officer Outreach Coordinator position to promote the adoption of innovative measures to increase the attractiveness of the Agency as an employer and promote the Agency and its food safety mission to professional groups and academic institutions.
- Continuance of the Student Loan Repayment program for PHVs.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of mission-critical front-line positions that are filled. (3.1.1.1)	96.3%
% of employees that remain at FSIS for 2 years or more. (3.1.1.2)	85%

ANNUAL PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of PHVs remaining with FSIS for >2 yrs. (including Malak Scholars).	85%

Outcome 3.1: Maintain a Well-Trained and Engaged Workforce

Result 12: Enhance Training and Development Opportunities Across Competency Areas

This result focuses on delivering a range of training and development activities to FSIS employees. FSIS continues to enhance and expand its training offerings by using new training delivery tools and more frequent course offerings. The FSIS workforce is critical to the day-to-day oversight of inspection operations, and these training strategies help reduce the inherent risks the Agency faces in ensuring that its inspection workforce is sufficiently trained to identify and prevent FSIS-regulated product contamination and to ensure animals are humanely treated before slaughter.

In FY 2020, FSIS will continue working on transforming training programs and offerings. To date, FSIS has delivered training and established competency models in certain mission-critical occupations. FSIS plans to continue to modernize its training efforts in FY 2020 to meet all new policy and HR initiatives and will support a range of training and development activities, depending on availability of resources, including:

- Continuing to redesign PHV training modules for the updated PHV training and starting the redesign of Inspection Methods classroom training.
- Employing alternative delivery methods and training approaches that are suitable to the content and audiences FSIS reaches, such as a USDA-redesigned AgLearn and an interactive learning platform.
- Marketing and promoting increased OFO inspection personnel use of online technical materials available through Help resources, InsideFSIS, and AgLearn.
- Supporting external training offerings to both maintain competencies and fill gaps in key areas.
- Providing access to existing searchable visuals online such as photographs, animations, videos, point-of-view reference materials, and 360-degree videos.

Leadership training will focus on offerings/opportunities to improve leadership and management competencies in the areas of accountability, vision, problem-solving, and leveraging diversity. FSIS will fill core classes to at least 90 percent capacity. Inspection and technical training will focus on competencies in staff through updated offerings.

To measure progress, FSIS will assess knowledge gained from these efforts to analyze training results to better interpret and measure training outcomes. FSIS will also continue to analyze and use Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results and employee responses to training and FSIS' annual surveys to advance content development, training delivery, and interpret and measure outcomes.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% increase in knowledge gained in key occupations within 180 days. (3.1.2.1)	83.9%

Outcome 3.1: Maintain a Well-Trained and Engaged Workforce

Result 13: Ensure Equal Opportunity and a Diverse and Inclusive Environment

FSIS remains committed to ensuring equal opportunity for all employees and fostering a workforce that is diverse, inclusive, and engaged. This result seeks to build on these values by ensuring compliance with Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws and regulations and by promoting and enhancing employee engagement initiatives and activities. Required activities that the Agency will continue to implement which support this goal include: distributing civil rights policies, conducting compliance reviews, processing EEO complaints, managing Special Emphasis Programs, marketing the availability of the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) program, and reporting affirmative action plans and complaint activity data to the USDA and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

During FY 2019, FSIS continued numerous efforts geared toward enhancing its EEO and Civil Rights (EEO/CR) programs. Specifically, the Agency issued previously developed EEO/CR training to the workforce. As part of this effort, the Agency continued to utilize the previously implemented standardized knowledge check questions into its training modules to assess employees' EEO and Civil Rights competency and the effectiveness of its training program. During FY 2018, the results from the knowledge check questions demonstrated that 78 percent of the employees who completed the training gleaned additional knowledge from the training. The Agency will again tabulate the percentage of employees who gleaned additional knowledge from the FY 2019 training.

To continue its proactive efforts, the Agency marketed and promoted its ADR program through the development and delivery of numerous Conflict Management training modules. These modules were delivered to both Agency leadership as well as during Front Line Supervisors' annual meetings. Additionally, the Agency continued to market its other ADR services through various presentations and webinars. The Agency continued to enhance its Compliance Assistance, Review, and Evaluation (CARE) process. Specifically, the employee climate survey questions were revised and an overall template report that outlined specific areas of focus for each review was developed. The Agency also began comparing prior reviews to current reviews to highlight areas where significant changes may have occurred and observed trends that may cause barriers within the Agency.

Since many of the initiatives previously referenced are ongoing priorities, they will continue to be addressed in FY 2020. This ongoing effort provides the Agency the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of several changes made and new initiatives implemented, including EEO/CR training and CARE reviews. Additionally, in response to several statutory and regulatory changes imposed by EEOC, the Agency will address the deficiencies noted in its affirmative action plan which include conducting a comprehensive barrier analysis aimed at identifying barriers to employment within the various protected groups-notably, persons with disabilities.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of Alternative Dispute Resolution acceptance rate for formal and informal EEO complaints. (3.1.3.1)	48%
% of employees who complete mandatory EEO/CR training that satisfy competency requirements. (3.1.3.2)	76%
% increase in FSIS' FEVS employee engagement survey index to 69 percent. (3.1.3.3)	69.4%

Outcome 3.2: Improve Processes and Services

Result 14: Enhance Efficiency and Effectiveness of Key Business Processes and Systems

This result focuses on ensuring that FSIS' business practices and systems are efficient and effective, and increasingly enabling FSIS personnel - in particular, its frontline workforce - to dedicate more of their time toward advancing the Agency's core food safety mission. FSIS continues to align and enhance organizational business and management processes, workflows, and technology to support sound operations, with a particular focus on HR, IT, and Procurement. These initiatives will help reduce inherent risks by improving data integrity, reliability, and accessibility, and by equipping FSIS personnel with information required to make sound decisions.

FSIS will build upon progress achieved in FY 2019 to enhance our strategic human capital planning capabilities, procurement, IT, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) processes, external audit and internal evaluation processes, and further expand our complete budget and financial management system enhancements in FY 2020. Illustrative examples include:

Human Resources: In FY 2020, FSIS will review hiring processes initiated after the acceptance of the Tentative Offer Letter to identify and improve the consistency and effectiveness of HR processes which currently create a backlog or require significant time to complete. The Agency will also focus on other parts of the hiring process that represent bottlenecks and remove impediments such as the food inspection assessment tool. Additionally, FSIS will engage with OPM to accelerate the processing of high-priority mission support recruitment actions and free up internal HR staffing personnel to focus on front-line hiring.

Procurement: To better project the upcoming FY 2020 acquisition workload, FSIS will hold meetings with each program area to develop an acquisition plan in the first quarter. Within the context of the existing fiscal environment, pre-planning will aid procurement in identifying when to best execute the Agency's procurement actions. FSIS has designated a Mission Area Senior Program Manager (MASPM) to help ensure the success of all acquisition programs within FSIS. The MASPM will communicate with programs with procurement requests to identify and plan FY 2020 acquisitions.

Evaluation: The Evaluation Workgroup (EWG) was established in FY 2017 as a formal mechanism to propose, identify, prioritize, coordinate, integrate, and collaborate on FSIS evaluations. The EWG's evidence-based evaluations directly support FSIS enterprise governance and Agency decision making by providing information about how activities, policies, processes, or changes may be optimized to achieve desired results. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to support programs by conducting evaluations identified in the FSIS Evaluation Plan to assess a program's effectiveness at achieving its intended outcome. In addition, FSIS will conduct mission critical evaluations, surveys, and other analyses identified by the EWG and programs, in high-priority areas to help enhance program and/or process efficacy.

GOAL 3: Achieve Operational Excellence

Information Technology: FSIS will continue to evaluate and refine its processes and IT Roadmap, including increasing the use of cloud and mobile technologies as possible, to ensure its business technology and enterprise architecture will continue to meet its evolving mission and increasingly mobile workforce. FSIS will redesign and streamline processes and select innovative technologies to help support workforce productivity and, in FY 2020, respond to updated departmental and Federal requirements. FSIS will continue to use the IT Procurement Process Toolkit to improve the customer experience with IT procurements. The Agency will also conduct additional IT road mapping activities, such as a multi-year transition plan to deploy additional cloud and mobile technologies and continue its transition to more agile methodologies.

Freedom of Information Act: FOIA efforts this year will focus on improving FSIS staff awareness of their roles and responsibilities under the FOIA. The FOIA staff will continue to conduct several training sessions with FSIS staff to highlight all employees' responsibilities under the FOIA, ensuring knowledge of FSIS' processes and requirements, and improving the quality and timeliness of FOIA responses. FSIS management will implement performance standards related to FOIA for all supervisors to ensure accountability and compliance with the FOIA requirements. The FOIA staff will continue to brief stakeholders on the FSIS FOIA process and evaluate stakeholder feedback to further enhance the customer experience.

Audits: In FY 2019, FSIS began to meet quarterly with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to discuss the status of current GAO audits as well as to gather direct feedback on FSIS' proposed corrective actions in response to audit recommendations. This effort was to ensure that actions taken are sufficient for addressing audit findings and that audit recommendations are closed in a timely manner. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue these quarterly meetings with GAO and will also continue to identify other approaches that will streamline the audit liaison process to help improve implementation of corrective actions in response to audit recommendations. Additionally, FSIS continues to work closely with the USDA's Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) to ensure the timely implementation and closure of the Office of the Inspector General's recommendations.

Financial Systems: In FY 2019, FSIS continued to support the modernization of its export certificate process and began billing industry for PHIS export services. In addition, the Agency made efforts to modernize and automate financial systems used to allocate and track budgets for the State MPI Programs through the development of an internal financial management database and by improving the interface between USDA's Financial Management Modernization Initiative and the Health and Human Services systems. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to work toward building or modifying interfaces and automating business processes, increasing analysis capabilities, and gaining efficiencies in transforming complex financial data into practical information. This includes completing FSIS-specific projects (i.e., Financial Reporting Improvements and Optimization or FRIO) related to budgeting and financial management.

Investment Reviews: The Enterprise Investment Board will continue to conduct periodic reviews of Agency enterprise governance-approved projects. This coordinated approach will promote good fiscal stewardship and accountability for Agency funds by monitoring project progress to ensure that the project milestones are being met and, if they are not, that corrective actions are being taken to bring the projects back into alignment, as appropriate.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of defined process times met for hiring, procurement, and IT.[16] (3.2.1.1)	78%

ANNUAL PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of reviews conducted of Agency enterprise governance-approved projects to ensure they are operating within their authorized budget and are on track in meeting project goals and milestones.[17]	100%
% of grievances and Unfair Labor Practices complaints (ULP) processed in accordance with the Labor Management Agreement (*Lm*A).	95%

[16] FSIS uses an indexed measure to drive improvements related to meeting defined process times for hiring, procurement, and IT. Hiring: FSIS will focus on reducing the time to hire for the third stage in the hiring process. That stage starts with the tentative offer and ends with the EOD date. FSIS seeks to reduce that time by 10% of the baseline (the baseline is an average of the last 3 fiscal years). IT: This measure calculates the process times for which development, modernization, and enhancement investments are met for specific projects. The FY 2020 target is 10% reduction from the baseline. Procurement: A representative number of contracts have been identified according to their impact and dollar value. The process times for each contract across three phases (planning, implementation, and closeout) will be met 75% of the time. Separately, FSIS will also continue to use internal process time metrics for resolving grievances and unfair labor practices as prescribed in the *Lm*A, as well as preparing and deciding on discipline cases in accordance with 5 CFR.

[17] Reviews will include non-baseline projects only and will be conducted for projects until development is complete; more reviews will be conducted toward the end of the fiscal year as more activity will be available for review from the start of the year. Reviews exclude operational type projects such as travel.

Outcome 3.2: Improve Processes and Services

Result 15: Improve Service Delivery

In parallel with result 14, this result focuses on the delivery of high-quality services in a responsive and timely manner particularly, in the areas of procurement, HR, and IT. FSIS continues to develop and maintain a more robust service delivery standard that is attuned to individual and organizational needs. In addition, FSIS has emphasized more frequent and effective communication across program offices and servicing organizations to ensure needs are met, accountabilities are clearly identified, and outcomes are shared and mutually beneficial.

FSIS is actively engaged with the Department's Office of Customer Experience (OCX), and we are pursuing several initiatives in this area. In FY 2019, we:

1. Successfully integrated the Small Plant Help Desk with AskFSIS. This provides a more consistent and streamlined customer experience for small and very small plants.

2. Began the eDevice initiative, which will put computers into the hands of all FSIS field staff for the first time. Not only will this be more efficient for training, timesheets, and travel, but it will also make the field staff feel like part of FSIS by including them on communications and announcements, as well as providing access to Agency resources and policies.

3. Took the lead in the Secretary's OneUSDA call center pilot. We provided staffing resources to take over administrative control, ensure that the pilot collects the information necessary for a long-run decision to continue or stop the call center pilot, and provide guidance to the Department's contractors to ensure that the software being delivered meets the needs of the Department.

The Agency will build upon progress achieved in FY 2019 to enhance customer satisfaction in HR, Procurement, and IT. Illustrative examples include:

Human Resources: In HR, FSIS will aim to sustain and/or exceed hiring manager and job applicant satisfaction with HR service delivery based on results gleaned from surveys administered by OPM. The Agency will also compress pre-employment activities to keep candidates engaged. The latter will be accomplished through on-site recruiting events targeting mission critical occupations and moving away from paper-based pre-employment tools to digital tools such as digital fingerprints and electronic forms submission.

Additionally, HR will improve the employee onboarding experience by issuing a LincPass for each new employee by the end of the first week of employment, thereby providing access to FSIS systems more rapidly. HR will also begin creating individual employee electronic identification and e-mail accounts as part of the employee's profile for faster receipt of Agency information.

GOAL 3: Achieve Operational Excellence

Procurement: In FY 2020, FSIS acquisition management will improve service delivery by assigning the program areas of FSIS a team of contract specialists headed by a lead contract specialist with subject matter expertise to serve as a central point of contact. The team lead will ensure the quality and timeliness of requested procurement actions, effectively communicate status of procurement requests, and manage workflow. This new process will eliminate the ambiguity program officials may face in identifying the contract specialist working their requirement thus improving service delivery.

Financial Systems: In FY 2019, FSIS continued to support the modernization of its export certificate process and began billing industry for PHIS export services. In addition, the Agency made efforts to modernize and automate financial systems used to allocate and track budgets for the State MPI Programs through the development of an internal financial management database and by improving the interface between USDA's Financial Management Modernization Initiative and the Health and Human Services systems. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue work on building or modifying interfaces and automating business processes, increasing analysis capabilities, and gaining efficiencies in transforming complex financial data into practical information. This includes completing FSIS-specific projects (i.e., FRIO) related to budgeting and financial management.

Information Technology: In IT, FSIS will improve its approval process and customer support procedures to increase customer satisfaction and workforce productivity. For example, FSIS plans to use recent survey results to make improvements to the customer experience when requesting new hardware or software.

Customer Service: In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to analyze data from recent surveys on services delivered to internal customers within FSIS. The findings will inform investment decisions regarding future potential enhancements. FSIS will also use survey data on employee preferences related to training course access and delivery to increase customer satisfaction.

STRATEGIC PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
% of client satisfaction with key FSIS services. (3.2.2.1)	80%

ANNUAL PLAN MEASURES	FY 2020 TARGETS
Maintain the Agency's IT Customer Satisfaction rating.	90%

Cross-Cutting

Result 16: Enhance Collaboration With Our Partners

FSIS maintains a multitude of collaborations and partnerships to improve food safety outcomes in a manner that would be impossible to achieve alone. FSIS engages with Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, and local agencies and stakeholders at meetings, conferences, and in working groups aimed at preventing and responding to foodborne illness and protecting public health.

Each year, FSIS builds on its successes from existing collaborations and in initiating new relationships to further its strategic goals to prevent foodborne illness, protect public health, and modernize inspection systems, policies, and the use of scientific approaches. During FY 2020, FSIS will focus on the following collaborations that will further U.S. food safety efforts. A description of each group referenced and additional collaborations can be found in the Appendix.

Food Emergency Response Network (FERN): FERN is a network of food testing laboratories consisting of more than 160 Federal, State, local, and Tribal laboratories jointly administered by FSIS and FDA. Its members have the capability to test for microbiological, chemical, and radiological contaminants in foods. The network has worked to increase the food defense capabilities of food testing laboratories throughout the Nation. This has been accomplished through training, method development, and method validation programs. Cooperative agreements between FSIS and State laboratories have increased the States' capacities and capabilities for select and threat agent testing. The network has worked to protect the food system through targeted surveillance activities associated with imported foods, the school lunch program, retail samples, and NSSE. During FY 2020, FSIS will collaborate with FDA and other Federal partners, the cooperative agreement State laboratories, and State and local health departments on food defense testing for NSSE, including the Super Bowl and national political conventions.

FSIS-FDA Dual-Jurisdiction Establishments Workgroup: In January 2018, USDA and FDA entered into a formal agreement to increase regulatory and operational efficiency and improve program effectiveness through enhanced collaboration and coordination on areas of mutual interest. As part of the agreement, interagency workgroups were convened to improve coordination on issues of common concern. FSIS and FDA established an interagency Dual-jurisdiction Establishments Workgroup to bring greater clarity and consistency to jurisdictional decisions under FSIS and FDA's respective authorities, identify and potentially reduce the number of establishments subject to the dual regulatory requirements, and define a transition period. The efforts of the working group will increase regulatory efficiency, decrease unnecessary regulatory burdens, and use government resources more efficiently to protect public health.

In FY 2019, the Workgroup created an inspector tool that crosswalked language in the Food Safety Modernization Act Preventive Controls for Human Foods rule with FSIS' HACCP and sanitation regulations. The tool aids regulators and small and very small dual jurisdiction establishments in transitioning away from the need to maintain separate documented food safety systems (one to cover FDA-regulated products and one to cover FSIS-regulated products), simply because the two agencies have different naming conventions for the required components of "food safety systems." The Workgroup also initiated efforts to update and expand the Dual Jurisdiction Establishment MOU which will continue in FY 2020.

FDA Initiatives: FSIS is currently working in collaboration with FDA on new initiatives for consumer education and looking for new and creative ways to engage consumers and to amplify consumer messages through new partnerships.

Healthy People Food Safety Workgroup (HP FSWG): Healthy People is a long-standing Governmentwide initiative aimed at improving the health of all Americans through establishing and monitoring science-based 10-year national objectives organized across a range of health topics. The food safety topic is managed by the Healthy People Food Safety Workgroup (HP FSWG) which includes subject matter experts from FSIS, FDA, CDC and other Department of Health and Human Services entities, and the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service. The goal of the HP food safety topic area is to reduce foodborne illness in the United States by improving food safety-related behaviors and practices. In FY 2020, FSIS will continue to co-lead the HP FSWG with FDA and complete the data submission and reports for the HP 2020 objectives. The workgroup will also finalize the HP 2030 food safety objectives and targets and assist in the public roll-out of food safety objectives for the HP 2030 decade.

Human Food Produced Using Animal Cell Culture Technology: As a first step toward addressing how Federal regulatory agencies will assure the safety and accurate labeling of human food produced using animal cell culture technology and the inspection of establishments involved in the production of these products, the USDA's Office of Food Safety and FDA entered into a formal agreement on March 7, 2019. This formal agreement describes the roles of FSIS and FDA with respect to the regulatory oversight of these products. In late FY 2019, FSIS and FDA established three workgroups to refine regulatory frameworks and develop more exact specifications. Specifically, FSIS and FDA established working groups tasked with developing processes and procedures for: (1) premarket food safety assessments by FDA, (2) inspections and the transition of oversight from FDA to FSIS during the cell harvest stage, and (3) labeling oversight by FSIS.

These workgroups will continue their efforts in FY 2020. While FSIS does not anticipate proposing any new regulations for the harvesting or processing of cell-cultured food, as existing HACCP and sanitation regulations readily address all food safety risks posed by this technology, FSIS will likely develop new labeling requirements, including standardized naming conventions, through a public process, likely rulemaking, in coordination with FDA. This process will be informed by the thousands of public comments already submitted to FSIS regarding the labeling of these products.

Integrated Networks for Foodborne Outbreak Response and Management: During FY 2020, FSIS will strengthen its collaborations with network partners to increase awareness of FSIS' outbreak response procedures and highlight data and information FSIS needs to support traceback investigations and food recalls.

Interagency Retail *Lm* Action Plan, Enhancing Outreach on the Control of Listeria monocytogenes in Retail Delicatessens: In FY 2018, FSIS convened a retail workgroup to develop an interagency retail *Lm* action plan to guide outreach to support the control of *Lm* at retail delicatessens. This effort was in response to a recommendation from the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI) to FSIS. In FY 2019, FSIS, in collaboration with FDA and CDC, convened focus groups of retailers and State and local agencies to gather input on the access to and usefulness of Federal outreach and other sources of information to support sanitation and safe handling of RTE foods at retail to mitigate the risk of listeriosis.

During FY 2020, the FSIS retail workgroup will collaborate with FDA and CDC to map out current Federal outreach activities related to the control of *Lm* at retail and evaluate the information gathered from the focus groups to identify opportunities to better leverage limited Federal resources to support retail food safety. The information will be used by FSIS and its public health partners to develop the Interagency Retail *Lm* Action Plan supporting best practices in the control of *Lm* at retail delicatessens and to jointly develop and disseminate outreach materials for retailers on specific topics such as slicers. FSIS will post these educational materials on its website.

Interagency Collaboration on Genomics for Food and Feed Safety (Gen-FS): Gen-FS is an interagency group with agency leaders from FDA, CDC, FSIS, ARS, APHIS, and the National Center for Biotechnology Information at the National Institutes of Health. The collaboration's primary objective is to coordinate, strengthen, and lead WGS efforts among Federal and State partners.

In order to provide a harmonized view of what WGS can do in a public health or One Health setting and capture how it is being used, FSIS joined other Gen-FS members in drafting a manuscript titled, "The Use of Whole Genome Sequencing for Food Safety and Public Health in the United States - A Publication by the Gen-FS." During FY 2020, FSIS will participate in the multi-agency clearance of the manuscript and assist in its submission for peer review and publication by a scientific journal. FSIS will also continue to co-lead the Gen-FS Biomarkers subgroup focused on identifying genes in *Salmonella* involved with virulence and pathogenicity, survival and adaptability, and resistance to biocides. In FY 2020, FSIS scientists will join other workgroup experts to develop a framework for risk ranking geno-types. FSIS will also participate in a new Gen-FS workgroup convened to improve the content and clarity of metadata associated with pathogens from food, animal, human, and other sources.

National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF): This committee provides impar-tial, scientific advice, and/or peer reviews to Federal food safety agencies for use in the development of an integrated national food safety systems approach that assures the safety of domestic, imported, and exported foods. The com-mittee reports to the Secretary of Agriculture through the Under Secretary for Food Safety and to the Secretary of Health and Human Services through the Assistant Secretary for Health. In FY 2019, FSIS facilitated the publication of the previous committee's two completed reports, "*Salmonella* Control Strategies in Poultry" and "Virulence Factors and Attributes That Define Foodborne STEC as Severe Human Pathogens," in the Journal of Food Protection. During FY 2020, FSIS will continue to support the new committee which met in FY 2018 and approved two new charges, "The Use of Water in Animal Slaughter and Processing" and "Appropriate Product Testing Procedures and Criteria to Verify Process Control for Microbial Pathogens or appropriate indicator organisms in RTE Foods under FDA's jurisdiction." In FY 2020, FSIS will support meetings of the subcommittees as they continue efforts on the two charges and begin drafting reports. FSIS will also facilitate the recruitment of new NACMCF members and the development of work charges for the subsequent Committee to consider.

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI): This committee advises the U.S. Secre-tary of Agriculture on matters affecting Federal and State inspection program activities, including food safety policies that will contribute to USDA's regulatory policy development. In FY 2018, the Agency published Federal Register Notice (83 FR 50632) soliciting nominations for membership to fill pending vacancies. During FY 2019, FSIS submit-ted the Committee nomination and Charter packages for departmental approval. In FY 2020, FSIS will convene the Committee and present work charges for the Committee to address.

Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL)

FSIS serves on the APHL Food Safety Committee in a liaison capacity. The committee, which is comprised of representatives from State agriculture, environmental, and public health laboratories, meets by teleconference each month and in person twice a year. The committee's purpose is to share information, promote beneficial strategies, coordinate training, and develop methods standardization across labs. In the past, FSIS has collaborated through APHL to provide coordination for FERN activities, but this could be expanded to consider other laboratory efforts.

Conference for Food Protection (CFP)

The Conference for Food Protection is a non-profit organization created to provide a formal process for representatives from the food industry, government, academia, and consumer organizations to identify and address emerging problems of food safety and formulate recommendations. Though the conference has no formal regulatory authority, it significantly influences food safety guidance, model laws, and regulations among all government agencies and minimizes disparate interpretations and implementation.

Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response (CIFOR)

The Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response is a multidisciplinary collaboration of national associations and Federal agencies, including FSIS, working together since 2006 to improve methods at the local, State, and Federal levels to detect, investigate, control, and prevent foodborne disease outbreaks. Council member representatives include experts in epidemiology, public health laboratory, and environmental health activities and food regulation at the local, State, and Federal levels. CIFOR was created to develop and share guidelines, processes, and products that will facilitate effective and collaborative foodborne outbreak response.

Dual-Jurisdiction Establishments Workgroup (January 2018 USDA-FDA Memorandum of Understanding)

In January 2018, USDA and FDA entered into a formal agreement to increase regulatory and operational efficiency and improve program effectiveness through enhanced collaboration and coordination on areas of mutual interest. As part of the agreement, interagency workgroups were convened to improve coordination on issues of common concern. FSIS and FDA established an interagency Dual-Jurisdiction Establishments Workgroup to bring greater clarity and consistency to jurisdictional decisions under FSIS and FDA's respective authorities, identify and potentially reduce the number of establishments subject to the dual regulatory requirements, and define a transition period. The efforts of the working group will increase regulatory efficiency, decrease unnecessary regulatory burdens, and use government resources more efficiently to protect public health.

Enhancing Outreach and Partnerships with 27 State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) Programs

FSIS maintains a multitude of collaborations and partnerships to improve food safety outcomes in a manner that would be impossible to achieve alone. FSIS engages with State, Tribal, territorial, and local agencies and stakeholders at meetings, conferences, and in working groups aimed at preventing and responding to foodborne illness and to protect public health. FSIS builds on its successes from existing collaborations/partnerships with State MPI Programs to prevent foodborne illness and protect public health.

Environmental Health Specialists Network (EHS-Net)

EHS-Net (pronounced S-Net) is a CDC-led collaborative forum of State and local environmental health specialists and Federal agencies, including FSIS, whose mission is to improve environmental health practice. These specialists collaborate with epidemiologists and laboratorians to identify and prevent environmental factors contributing to foodborne illness outbreaks.

Food Emergency Response Network (FERN)

In 2004, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 9 (HSPD-9) established the creation of the FERN under the joint oversight of FSIS and the FDA. The network's mission is to integrate the Nation's multi-level food testing laboratories to detect, identify, and respond to and recover from a bioterrorism or public health emergency involving the food supply. FERN provides Federal funding to FERN partner/State laboratories annually for the development of analytical methods, validation of analytical methods and targeted surveillance of FDA/FSIS regulated commodities at the retail level. FSIS will continue to provide joint oversight with the FDA FERN National Program Office. FSIS will continue to partner with the FDA in targeted surveillance oversight of NSSEs annually.

Food and Agriculture Government and Sector Coordinating Councils

In 2003, the Federal Government designated the Food and Agriculture Sector as a critical infrastructure sector, recognizing its significant contribution to national security and the economy. Since then, the sector has successfully built public-private partnerships that improved information sharing, created forums to share best practices, and developed tools and exercises to improve incident response and recovery. FSIS will continue to work with partners from the private sector, academia, and Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments through the Food and Agriculture Government and Sector Coordinating Councils to promote voluntary adoption of food defense practices by FSIS-regulated establishments.

Food Forum — National Academies

The Food Forum was established by The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) Food and Nutrition Board in 1993 to allow selected science and technology leaders in the food industry, top administrators in the Federal Government, representatives from consumer interest groups, and academicians to periodically discuss and debate food and food-related issues openly and in a neutral setting. The objective of discussions, however, is to illuminate issues, not to resolve them. Unlike study committees of the NASEM, the Food Forum cannot provide advice or recommendations to any government agency or other organization. Similarly, workshop summaries or other products resulting from forum activities are not intended to reach conclusions or recommendations but, instead, are to reflect the variety of opinions expressed by the participants.

FSIS Research Priorities & Research Collaborations

FSIS maintains and publishes a list of food safety research priorities to promote research in areas of importance to the FSIS mission. FSIS convenes its Research Priorities Review Panel annually to identify data gaps and propose research topics and associated study priorities to FSIS management for approval. To facilitate support, research priorities are communicated to the food safety research community via the FSIS web page, scientific meetings and university/industry outreach. These priorities are also communicated to USDA ARS Food Safety National Program and USDA, National Institute of Food and Agriculture Food Safety Program via regularly scheduled meetings. FSIS often facilitates accomplishment of priority research by collaborating with food safety researchers. Such collaborations may include contributing samples, data, microbiological isolates, and scientific expertise.

Foodborne Diseases Active Surveillance Network (FoodNet)

FoodNet conducts surveillance for *Campylobacter*, *Cryptosporidium*, *Cyclospora*, *Listeria*, *Salmonella*, STEC O157 and non-O157, *Shigella*, *Vibrio*, and *Yersinia* infections diagnosed by laboratory testing of samples from patients. The network was established in July 1996 and is a collaborative program among the CDC; 10 State health departments-Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, Tennessee, and selected counties in California, Colorado, and New York; FSIS; and the FDA. FoodNet accomplishes its work through active surveillance, surveys of laboratories, physicians, and the general population and population-based epidemiologic studies.

FoodSafety.gov

FoodSafety.gov is the cross-Federal website operated by the Department of Health and Human Services that FSIS uses to promote safe food handling to consumers. Representatives from FSIS, CDC, and FDA serve as the subject matter experts on the editorial board of the website. It serves as the "gateway" to food safety information provided by Federal agencies. FoodSafety.gov was launched after a working group of Federal partners identified confusion from consumers about where they should go to find reliable information on food safety topics. The website is now a "one-stop shop" for consumers on food safety and covers all the information FSIS uses to promote safe food handling in detail. The website is frequently used as the call to action in social media messages, blogs, and press releases.

Healthy People Food Safety Workgroup (HP FSWG)

Healthy People is a long-standing governmentwide initiative aimed at improving the health of all Americans through establishing and monitoring science-based 10-year national objectives. Food Safety is one of the topic areas. The HP FSWG includes subject matter experts from CDC, FDA, other HHS organizations, USDA FSIS and FNS. The goal of the HP food safety topic area is to reduce foodborne illness in the United States by improving food safety-related behaviors and practices.

Human Food Produced Using Animal Cell Culture Technology Workgroups

As a first step toward addressing how Federal regulatory agencies will assure the safety and accurate labeling of human food produced using animal cell culture technology and the inspection of establishments involved in the production of these products, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Food Safety and FDA entered into a formal agreement on March 7, 2019. This formal agreement describes the roles of FSIS and FDA with respect to the regulatory oversight of these products. In late FY 2019, FSIS and FDA established three workgroups to refine regulatory frameworks and develop more exact specifications.

Inter-American Network of Food Analysis Laboratories (INFAL)

INFAL is hosted by the Pan American Health Organization. The network includes laboratories in every country in the Americas and offers a vehicle through which the laboratories exchange information, share data, and offer training. The INFAL mission is to promote the assurance of food safety and food quality in the region of the Americas for the prevention of foodborne diseases, protect consumers' health and facilitate trade, and encourage and strengthen the development and interaction of food analysis laboratories within the framework of national integrated programs for food protection. Its general objectives are promoting methodological harmonization and methodological equivalence of food analysis laboratories, promoting the implementation of equivalent quality management systems in INFAL laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025), and strengthening the technical-scientific cooperation among the countries involved. FSIS is available to host laboratory methods training for countries in the Network.

Integrated Consortium of Laboratory Networks (ICLN)

ICLN was established in June 2005 by a Memorandum of Agreement among 10 Federal Departments/Agencies. Signatories work cooperatively to optimize national laboratory preparedness, promote common standards of performance, and fill gaps in coverage across all response phases. FSIS participates monthly in Laboratory Network Coordinating meetings hosted by the ICLN. This group primarily develops and proposes policies and procedures but also establishes common operating guidelines/standard operating procedures for the ICLN. FSIS participates in tabletop exercises, functional proficiency events, and leveraged training coordinated by the ICLN.

Integrated Foodborne Outbreak Response and Management

The biannual Integrated Foodborne Outbreak Response and Management Conference and PulseNet/OutbreakNet Regional meetings bring Federal, State, and local agency laboratorians, epidemiologists, environmental health specialists, and regulatory officials together to share the latest best practices in surveillance and outbreak detection and response to enteric diseases, with a focus on those caused by contaminated foods, water, and animals.

Interagency Collaboration on Genomics for Food and Feed Safety (Gen-FS)

Gen-FS is an interagency group with agency leaders from FDA, CDC, FSIS, ARS, APHIS, and the National Center for Biotechnology Information at the National Institutes of Health, with the primary function to coordinate, strengthen, and lead U.S. WGS efforts among Federal and State partners and further improve public health. The group works on cross-cutting priorities for molecular sequencing of foodborne and other zoonotic pathogens causing human illness for data collection and analysis and for the use of these data in support of surveillance and outbreak investigation activities.

Interagency Foodborne Outbreak Response Collaboration (IFORC)

IFORC, chartered in 2013, represents an important effort to improve coordination of Federal foodborne outbreak response responsibilities of CDC, FSIS, and FDA. IFORC works to improve activities by CDC, FSIS, and FDA concerning multistate foodborne outbreak detection, hypothesis generation, hypothesis testing, food vehicle identification, control measures to prevent illnesses and deaths, root cause analyses, and the dissemination of information on identified food safety systems gaps to inform efforts to prevent future outbreaks.

Interagency Food Safety Analytics Collaboration (IFSAC)

To enhance the safety of our food, three Federal agencies - CDC, FDA, and FSIS - teamed up in 2011 to create IFSAC. The goal of this collaboration is to improve coordination of Federal food safety analytic efforts and address crosscutting priorities for food safety data collection, analysis, and use. The current focus of IFSAC's activities is food-borne illness source attribution, defined as the process of estimating the most common food sources responsible for specific foodborne illnesses.

Interagency Retail *Lm* Action Plan: Enhancing Outreach on the Control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in Retail Delicatessens

In FY 2018, FSIS, in collaboration with FDA and CDC, convened a workgroup to develop an interagency retail *Lm* action plan to guide outreach to support the control of *Lm* at retail delicatessens. This effort was undertaken in response to a recommendation from the NACMPI to FSIS. During FY 2019, FSIS, with input from FDA and CDC, gathered input from retailers and State and local health departments on the access and usefulness of Federal outreach and other sources of information to support sanitation and safe handling of RTE foods at retail to mitigate the risk of listeriosis. In FY 2020, this information will be used by FSIS and its public health partners to develop the Interagency Retail *Lm* Action Plan supporting best practices in the control of *Lm* at retail delicatessens.

Interagency Risk Assessment Consortium (IRAC)

This consortium consists of representatives from 23 U.S. Government agencies, institutes and centers with responsibilities and related interests in the conduct of food safety risk assessments. In this consortium, agencies collectively work to enhance communication and coordination among the member agencies and promote the conduct of priority scientific research useful for the conduct of food safety risk assessment, advancement of modelling methods, and sharing data and information. The consortium supports continued advancement of the emergent field of quantitative microbiological risk assessment and evolving field of chemical risk assessment; both are required to guide major Federal policies and support risk management decision making.

International Association for Food Protection Annual Meeting

The International Association for Food Protection hosts an annual meeting which provides attendees with information on current and emerging food safety issues, the latest science, innovative solutions to new and recurring problems, and the opportunity to network with thousands of food safety professionals from around the globe. The meeting which is held in various locations throughout North America and is attended by over 3,600 top industry, academic and governmental food safety professionals, has become the leading food safety conference worldwide. FSIS experts present on the Agency's contributions in the field of food safety.

Laboratory Response Network (LRN)

The LRN was established by CDC in accordance with Presidential Decision Directive 39, which outlined national anti-terrorism policies and assigned specific missions to Federal departments and agencies. The LRN is charged with the task of maintaining an integrated network of State and local public health, Federal, military, and international laboratories that can respond to bioterrorism, emerging infectious diseases, chemical terrorism and other public health emergencies. FSIS has maintained its status as an LRN member lab since 2002.

National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI)

This committee advises the Secretary of Agriculture on matters affecting Federal and State inspection program activities, including on food safety policies that will contribute to USDA's regulatory policy development.

National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF)

This committee provides impartial scientific advice to Federal agencies to use in developing integrated food safety systems from farm to table and to ensure food safety in domestic and imported foods.

National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring Program (NARMS)

NARMS is an interagency, collaborative partnership with State and local public health departments, FDA, CDC, and USDA. This national public health surveillance system tracks changes in antimicrobial susceptibility of select food-borne enteric bacteria found in ill people (CDC), retail meats (FDA), and food animals (FSIS).

The primary objectives of NARMS are to monitor trends in antimicrobial resistance among enteric bacteria from humans, retail meats, and animals; disseminate timely information on antimicrobial resistance to promote interventions which reduce resistance among foodborne bacteria; conduct research to achieve better understanding of emergence, persistence, and spread of antimicrobial resistance; and provide data that assists FDA in decision making involving the approval of safe and effective antimicrobial drugs for animals. The NARMS findings from all the agency partners are published on a periodic basis in a single NARMS Integrated Report. The NARMS program at USDA focuses on sampling and testing of intestinal cecal contents, carcasses, and meat and poultry by FSIS.

Partnership for Food Protection (PFP)

PFP is a group of professionals from Federal, State, and local governments with roles in protecting the food supply and public health. PFP is the structure used to coordinate representatives with expertise in numerous specialties—food, feed, epidemiology, laboratory, animal health, environment, and public health—to integrate activities in the food safety system. PFP is led by a Governing Council of members from Federal, State, and local agencies, for which FSIS has a non-voting representative; Governing Council is responsible for oversight and management of the overall Partnership.

FSIS collaborates with the PFP, FDA, and CDC on the planning of the Consumer Food Safety Education Conference which is a gathering of consumer health-focused professionals from public and private sectors to explore influences on consumers and the way forward to enhance proper food preparation and hand hygiene practices. Participants include food safety educators and communicators, public health, environmental health, and Cooperative Extension professionals, consumer advocates, food and beverage industry professionals, local, State and Federal Government and military personnel, and K-12 and college and university educators. The conference features take-home strategies, tools, and resources to support attendees in their efforts to tackle their biggest food safety education program challenges and influence consumer food safety attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors. The conference also provides opportunities to network and engage in collaborative dialogue with a range of health and food safety professionals.

PulseNet

PulseNet is a national laboratory network, consisting of 83 laboratories in 7 U.S. regions and headquartered at CDC, that connects foodborne illness cases to detect outbreaks. PulseNet uses DNA fingerprinting, or patterns of bacteria making people sick, to detect thousands of local and multistate outbreaks. Since the network began in 1996, PulseNet has improved our food safety systems through identifying outbreaks early. This allows investigators to find the source, alert the public sooner, and identify gaps in our food safety systems that would not otherwise be recognized.

Rapid Response Teams (RRT)

RRTs are State-led multi-agency, multi-disciplinary teams that operate using Incident Command System/National Incident Management System principles and a Unified Command structure to respond to human and animal food emergencies. The teams can be comprised of partners from local, State, and Federal agencies, including FSIS, as well as stakeholders from academia and industry. The desired outcome of RRT development is to minimize the time between Agency notification of a human food or animal feed contamination event and implementation of effective control measures.

Shopper History Outbreak Partnership (SHOP)

The Shopper History Outbreak Partnership is a collaboration between FSIS, FDA, CDC, and State departments of health and agriculture with the goal of identifying and promoting best practices for the use of consumer purchase information to assist with investigating foodborne outbreaks. The partnership was initiated in 2016 to establish a forum for Federal and State partners to share experiences and resources regarding the use of purchase histories obtained via shopper/loyalty cards to assist with hypothesis generation and traceback of suspect food vehicles during outbreak investigations. Since then, the scope of the workgroup has expanded to include data from all purchases, including those made via credit/debit cards and online.

State Food Protection Task Forces (FPTF)

FSIS routinely participates on State agency–led food protection task forces that bring together the various stakeholders to discuss upcoming events and exercises, public outreach, and information sharing on current activities through periodic meetings. The stakeholders include personnel from local, State, and Federal public health and agriculture food regulatory agencies, law enforcement, and other food protection stakeholders. Additionally, FSIS participates in the FDA-led Coalition of Food Protection Task Forces, which promotes collaboration between State FPTFs and their members.

FSIS CORE VALUES

ACCOUNTABLE
FSIS holds itself accountable in fulfilling its regulatory mission and in serving the public interest.

COLLABORATIVE
FSIS actively promotes and encourages collaboration within our Agency and with our partners to prevent illness and protect public health.

EMPOWERED
FSIS employees are empowered with the necessary training, tools, and approaches they need to make and carry out informed decisions that protect public health and promote food safety.

SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED
FSIS is committed to deploying effective, evidence-based solutions to ensure that the Nation's food supply is safe.