FSIS Launches Updated Website

Customer service and modernization continue to be top priorities at FSIS. In launching our new site, user experience and user needs come first. The goal of the new site is better information organization, transparency and accessibility to critical food safety information. Based on feedback provided by our stakeholders—through surveys, roundtables, and focus groups—the new FSIS site design and approach to content will give users more control over how they view and consume information. We are expanding the employees section of the new site, too, to make more tools and information readily available to our workforce. The new site will use a combination of visual design and structured content to ensure that high-value information and common tasks are easier and accessible to all stakeholders—including recall information, policies and directives, and the rulemaking process.

As part of our mission, the site will also highlight our collaborative work and our commitment to science-based and data-driven policy decisions. We expect to launch next week: www.fsis.usda.gov.

FSIS to Announce the Internet Access at Official Establishments and Plants Proposed Rule

On March 2, 2021, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) will announce in the *Federal Register* that it is proposing to amend its regulations to require official meat, poultry, and egg products establishments and businesses receiving voluntary inspection services from FSIS that have an internet connection to provide FSIS access to it for the purposes of conducting and recording inspection verification activities. FSIS views internet service as a necessary utility, like lighting, heating, and laundry services, that should be provided by establishments as a regulatory condition of receiving inspection. Under this proposal, FSIS would not require establishments without internet access to purchase it or to upgrade the internet services they have, if inadequate for FSIS use.

FSIS inspection program personnel (IPP) need to have efficient internet access to receive their scheduled inspection tasks and to record the results of the inspection tasks in the FSIS Public Health Information System (PHIS).

Export Requirements Update

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

China, The People's Republic of
Ecuador
Mexico
Taiwan

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

FSIS to Announce...

FSIS is seeking public comments on the proposal until May 3, 2021. Comments may be submitted online via the federal eRulemaking portal, available at http://www.regulations.gov; by mail sent to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mailstop 3758, Washington, D.C., 20250-3700. All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the agency name and docket number FSIS-2020-0019.

Tips for a Faster Label Approval Process

Labels are currently taking **about 3-5** business days to evaluate.

TIP: The USDA inspection legends (legends) on meat, poultry and egg product labels do not have prescriptive size requirements; however, they must be conspicuous, legible and located on the principal display panel (PDP).

The USDA legend is required on labels of meat, poultry, and egg products processed under FSIS inspection. The format of the legend is shown in 9 CFR 312.2(b)(1) for meat, 381.96 for poultry, and 590.413 for egg products. The legend must appear on the PDP of product labels (9 CFR 317.2(c)(5), 381.116(a), 590.411(c)). FSIS regulations do not prescribe a specific location where the legend must be placed on the PDP. The regulations also do not specify a minimum size requirement; however, the regulations state that the legend must be conspicuously displayed and readily legible. The regulations also require that the specific information within the USDA legend be consistent with the illustrations in the regulations, including the same proportions of letter size and boldness.

Based on the illustration in the regulations, the first line of the text in the meat legend must be displayed as "INSPECTED" with "AND PASSED" on the second line, not "INSPECTED AND PASSED" on one line. The establishment number must be presented in the format "EST. 1234" for meat or "P-1234" for poultry. Final labels must be formatted and displayed in accordance with the regulations cited above to ensure the legend meets the specific requirements.

The legends for meat, poultry, and egg product labels may be found at the following links: meat legend, poultry legend, egg products legend.

For more information about the USDA legend and the definition of "principal display panel" please see pages 35 and 24 in A Guide to Federal Food Labeling Requirements for Meat, Poultry and Egg Products.

FSIS will continue to provide updates regarding label turnaround time, as well as suggestions to assist industry to streamline label submissions in its *Constituent Update*.

Policy Update

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

FSIS Directive 7120.1 Revision 55 - Safe and Suitable Ingredients Used in the Production of Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products