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FSIS Quarterly Sampling Reports to Include Antimicrobial Resistance Profile (AMR) Information

On December 18, 2020, FSIS will post guarterly antimicrobial resistance data for FSIS product categories. The sampling projects and pathogens in this data release include those reported under the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS). The antimicrobial resistance data in this release includes pathogens - Salmonella, Campylobacter, Shiga toxinproducing Escherichia coli (STEC), including E. coli O157:H7, isolate counts and resistance profile by FSIS product categories.

This release includes antimicrobial resistance data from the first guarter of Fiscal Year 2016 through the fourth quarter of Fiscal Year 2019 and is available on the Microbiology web page under Antimicrobial Resistance. The next report update will be around April 2021.

Antimicrobial resistance is an extremely complex pathogen characteristic. Aggregate information in these tables need to be considered as descriptive. Drawing meaningful conclusions by comparing just one guarter to another or one year to another may be inappropriate.

The NARMS is an interagency, collaborative partnership with State and local public health departments, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This surveillance system tracks changes in antimicrobial susceptibility of select foodborne enteric bacteria found in ill people (CDC), retail meats (FDA), and food animals (USDA). The NARMS program at USDA FSIS focuses on two sampling points-samples collected from food products, and intestinal (cecal) content samples. The NARMS data helps to assess the nature and magnitude of antibiotic resistance in bacteria recovered at different points along the farm-to-fork continuum.

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FSIS Pasteurized Egg Products Recognized Laboratory (PEPRLab) Program to be Discontinued

On October 29, 2020, FSIS published the revised Egg Products Inspection Regulations (Final Rule) that require egg products plants to develop and implement Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Systems and Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (Sanitation SOPs). The Final Rule states that the PEPRLab program administered by FSIS will be discontinued 60 days after the publication of the rule in the Federal Register. As a result, FSIS will discontinue the PEPRLab program on December 28, 2020. After that date, laboratories will no longer need to be recognized by the PEPRLab program to perform microbiological testing for federally inspected egg products plants.

Egg products plants must still meet Salmonella sampling and testing requirements as outlined in 9 CFR 590.580, and they can select commercial or private laboratories to analyze plant microbiological samples. FSIS has prepared <u>guidance</u> for stakeholders to use when selecting laboratories for their microbiological testing needs. In the future, FSIS may offer laboratory accreditation for Salmonella in egg products through its Accredited Laboratory Program. Please contact <u>peprlab@fsis.usda.gov</u> if there are any questions.

FSIS to Post Updated Dataset on Import Refusals

On December 15, 2020, FSIS will update the publicly posted dataset on import refusals for products that the agency regulates. Federal law requires every commercial shipment of imported meat, poultry, and egg products to be re-inspected prior to product entering U.S. commerce. FSIS re-inspects each shipment to verify labeling, proper certification, general condition, and any signs of tampering and to identify product adulterated by transportation damage. FSIS also performs additional activities on a random and/or for-cause basis, such as physical product examination and laboratory sampling for pathogens and chemical residues.

Any product that does not meet FSIS requirements is refused entry, and the importer has up to 45 days (30 days for egg products) to have the product destroyed for use as human food, re-exported/returned to the foreign country, converted to animal food, or brought into compliance with FSIS requirements, if applicable (e.g., relabeled, remarked, or issued a replacement certificate).

This dataset is updated around the 15th of each month and contains each shipment with product that was refused entry. To access these datasets or view more information about them, please visit the <u>FSIS</u> <u>Datasets</u> page.

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

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FSIS Announces Proposed Rule to Expand the Accredited Laboratory Program

FSIS announced in the Federal Register a proposed rule to modernize and expand the Accredited Laboratory Program (ALP). Under the ALP, FSIS currently accredits non-federal analytical chemistry laboratories to analyze meat, poultry and egg products for food chemistry and a small number of chemical residues. The ALP provides the food industry with an additional level of assurance that testing results from accredited labs will meet their food safety and product label composition needs.

As the need for more sampling and testing continues to rise within the food industry, FSIS searches for ways to modernize its programs, use all available resources, and implement the latest scientific advancements to provide opportunities for industry to have reliable laboratory services available.

The proposed regulatory changes in the Federal Register notice include modernized statistical methods to measure non-federal laboratory proficiency, enhancing program rigor and expansion of the program to include microbiological pathogen testing and additional chemical testing analyses that could be accredited under the ALP. Expansion of the program would provide existing ALP labs, and labs interested in joining the ALP, a greater selection of microbial pathogen analyses and chemical residue for accreditation. Test results from accredited laboratories provide greater confidence of accuracy to the meat, poultry, and egg products industries, who rely on sampling and testing to support decisions in their HACCP-based food safety systems.

This proposed rule could also result in a way for establishments to voluntarily submit industry data to FSIS. This comparable data could be utilized by the agency as a supplement to the sampling data collected by FSIS.

To view the proposed rule, visit <u>https://www.federalregister.gov/public-inspection/2020-27016/changes-to-accreditation-of-non-federal-analytical-testing-laboratories</u>. FSIS is accepting public comment on the proposed rule for 60 days after the date of publication of the proposed rule. The public, interested parties, and the scientific community are encouraged to review the proposal and provide comment on regulations.gov. FSIS will evaluate all comments before finalizing any regulatory change.

Export Requirements Update

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

Mexico

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

NARMS to Publish the 2018 Integrated Summary

The <u>National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS)</u> is an interagency, collaborative partnership with state and local public health departments, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This national public health surveillance system tracks changes in antimicrobial susceptibility of select foodborne enteric bacteria found in ill people (CDC), retail meats (FDA), and food animals (USDA). The NARMS program at USDA FSIS focuses on two sampling points—samples collected from food products and intestinal (cecal) content and other animal commodities. The NARMS information helps to assess the nature and magnitude of antibiotic resistance in bacteria recovered at different points along the farm-to-fork continuum.

Similar to the 2016-2017, in 2018, NARMS is publishing a NARMS Integrated Summary, instead of the long-form Integrated Report. The 2018 NARMS Integrated Summary describes the most important trends in antimicrobial resistant *Salmonella, Campylobacter*, generic *E. coli*, and *Enterococcus* in a bulleted list. This summary also provides genomic information for *Campylobacter* and *E. coli* retail meat and food animal isolates in addition to *Salmonella*.

Webinar: Overview of the New Egg Products Inspection Regulations

On October 29, 2020, FSIS published a final rule in the Federal Register modernizing the egg products inspection regulations (85 FR 68640). FSIS is holding a webinar on December 17 at 10:00 a.m. ET to discuss the changes to the regulations, including requirements that will take effect on December 28, 2020, new Sanitation Standard Operating Procedure and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) System requirements, and the rules of practice applicable to egg products plants.

Below are the event details for participants:

Step 1: Dial into the conference.

Dial-in: 888-251-2949 or 215-861-0694 Access Code: 3123620# Need an international dial-in number?

Step 2: Join the conference on your computer at: https://ems8.intellor.com/login/835705

Vietnam Export Certificates to Use Newly Available PHIS Exports Statement Module and Digital Signature

FSIS has developed a statements module for PHIS export certificates. The PHIS statements module allows country-specific attestations to be included in the remarks section of PHIS-generated 9060-5 forms, rather than having them included on a separate letterhead certificate. The PHIS statements module will be rolled out first for export applications for Vietnam, replacing the current use of letterhead certificates for meat and poultry exports to Vietnam. The statements module for Vietnam will be activated on December 14, 2020 for use with export applications that are approved on or after December 21, 2020. Vietnam has also agreed to accept digital signatures on the 9060-5 form, allowing FSIS personnel to electronically sign the 9060-5 form and 9060-5B, also referred to as the continuation sheet, via PHIS, and the FSIS personnel can then print the forms on security paper. FSIS is issuing a notice with detailed instructions for FSIS inspection program personnel on this new process.

Policy Update

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

FSIS Notice 64-20 - Changes in the Processing and Payment of Training Using the Standard Form-182

FSIS Notice 65-20 - Raw Pork Products Sampling Program

FSIS Notice 66-20 - Implementation of the Statements Module and Digital Signature for Exports Processed in the Public Health Information System for Vietnam