



**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Food Safety and Inspection Service**

[Docket No. **FSIS-2022-0029**]

**Proposed Framework for Controlling *Salmonella* in Poultry**

**AGENCY:** Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

**ACTION:** Notification of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** FSIS is hosting a virtual public meeting to discuss a regulatory framework that the Agency is considering for a new strategy to control *Salmonella* in poultry products and more effectively reduce foodborne *Salmonella* infections linked to these products. The framework under consideration has been shaped by months of information-gathering and discussions with a wide range of stakeholders, researchers, and scientists. FSIS is seeking input from stakeholders on this proposed framework, both at the public meeting and in written comments submitted in response to this *Federal Register* notice before FSIS moves forward with any proposed changes to the Agency's *Salmonella* strategy.

**DATES:** The virtual public meeting will be held on Thursday, November 3, 2022, from 10am-4pm EST. Submit comments on or before **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be virtual and will be viewed via the Zoom link provided by email when you register for the

meeting. Attendees must be pre-registered for the meeting. See the pre-registration instructions under "Registration and Meeting Materials."

Comments on this notice may be by one of the following methods:

- **Federal eRulemaking Portal:** This website provides the ability to type short comments directly into the comment field on this web page or attach a file for lengthier comments. Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the on-line instructions at that site for submitting comments.
- **Mail:** Send to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mailstop 3758, Washington, DC 20250-3700.
- **Hand- or courier-delivered submittals:** Deliver to 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Jamie L. Whitten Building, Room 350-E, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

*Instructions:* All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the Agency name and docket number **FSIS-2022-0029**. Comments received in response to this docket will be made available for public inspection and posted without change, including any personal information, to <https://www.regulations.gov>.

*Docket:* For access to background documents or comments received, email [docketclerk@usda.gov](mailto:docketclerk@usda.gov) or call 202-692- 4235 to schedule a time to visit the FSIS Docket Room at 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-3700.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Email Congressional and Public Affairs at: SM.FSIS.SALMONELLAMEETING@USDA.GOV.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Background**

FSIS is the public health agency in USDA whose mission is to ensure that meat, poultry, and egg products are safe, wholesome, and properly labeled and packaged. FSIS has used the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy People<sup>1</sup> target to set pathogen reduction goals for FSIS-regulated products over the past few decades. However, the 2010 and 2020 Healthy People targets for a reduction in *Salmonella* infections from all sources were not met.<sup>2</sup> The Healthy People 2030 target is to reduce *Salmonella* infections to a national case rate of no more than 11.5 per 100,000 consumers per year. To reach the 2030 target, illnesses must be reduced by 25%. Although this target is for *Salmonella* infections from all sources, FSIS has adopted the same target and aims to reduce *Salmonella* infections linked to all FSIS-regulated products by 25%.

Despite FSIS sampling data showing reductions in *Salmonella* contamination in poultry products, our current approach to *Salmonella* has not led to a demonstrable reduction in *Salmonella* infections to meet the Healthy People target. For example,

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<sup>1</sup> The Healthy People initiative guides national health promotion and disease prevention efforts to improve the health of the nation. Led by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) every decade since 1980, Healthy People identifies science-based objectives with targets to monitor progress and motivate and focus action.

<sup>2</sup> The Healthy People 2010 and 2020 targets were 6.8 and 11.4 *Salmonella* infections per 100,000 population, respectively. Between 2010 and 2017, infection rates averaged 15.8 *Salmonella* infections per 100,000 population.

during the five-year period from 2017 to 2021, the number of chicken product samples in which FSIS detected *Salmonella* decreased by more than 50%.<sup>3</sup> However, the estimated rate of human *Salmonella* infections from all sources has remained consistent over the last two decades, with an estimated 1.35 million infections in the U.S. each year.<sup>4</sup> The most recent report from the Interagency Food Safety Analytics Collaboration estimates that over 23% of foodborne *Salmonella* illnesses are attributable to poultry consumption – almost 17% from chicken and over 6% from turkey.<sup>5</sup>

### **Proposed Regulatory Framework to Reduce *Salmonella* Illnesses Attributable to Poultry**

FSIS is considering a regulatory framework for a new strategy to control *Salmonella* in poultry products and more effectively reduce foodborne *Salmonella* infections linked to these products. At the same time, FSIS is gathering scientific evidence relevant to the approaches presented in this framework. The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMF)<sup>6</sup> has been charged with providing guidance on what types of microbiological criteria FSIS might use to better

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<sup>3</sup>FSIS *Salmonella* verification sampling. Available at:

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/science-data/data-sets-visualizations/microbiology/salmonella-verification-testing-program-monthly>

<sup>4</sup>*Salmonella*: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Available at: *Salmonella* <https://www.cdc.gov/salmonella/index.html>

<sup>5</sup> Foodborne illness source attribution estimates for 2019 for *Salmonella*, *Escherichia coli* O157, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and *Campylobacter* using multi-year outbreak surveillance data, United States. IFAC October 2021. Available at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/ifsac/pdf/P19-2019-report-TriAgency-508.pdf>

<sup>6</sup>2021-2023 National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Food. FSIS Charge: Enhancing *Salmonella* Control in Poultry Products. Available at: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/policy/advisory-committees/national-advisory-committee-microbiological-criteria-foods-nacmcf/2021>.

prevent *Salmonella* infections associated with poultry products. FSIS is also completing a risk profile for pathogenic *Salmonella* subtypes in poultry and is collaborating on quantitative risk assessments<sup>7</sup> for *Salmonella* in chicken and turkey that will address key risk management questions associated with this framework. FSIS also expanded its exploratory sampling program for young chicken carcasses<sup>8</sup> to generate microbial data to help inform future policies.

While awaiting results from these activities, FSIS is sharing the key elements that the Agency is currently considering as part of a new regulatory strategy in this framework. FSIS is soliciting additional feedback from stakeholders addressing specific questions associated with this document before moving forward with any proposed changes to regulations or other actions.

The proposed framework that is currently under consideration is available on the FSIS website at: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/news-events/events-meetings/public-meeting-reducing-salmonella-poultry>.

### **Public Meeting**

FSIS is announcing that it will hold a virtual public meeting on November 3, 2022, to discuss issues related to the regulatory framework to control *Salmonella* in poultry products

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<sup>7</sup>FSIS Constituent Update July 1, 2022: FSIS Announces Cooperative Agreement on Salmonella Risk Assessment. Available at: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/news-events/news-press-releases/constituent-update-july-1-2022>.

<sup>8</sup>FSIS Notice 44-2 Revised Young Chicken Exploratory Sampling Program (August 11, 2022) Available at: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/policy/fsis-notice/44-22>.

under consideration. At this meeting, FSIS will accept public comment on the framework under consideration, which consists of three components that, together, support a comprehensive approach to controlling *Salmonella* in poultry. The three components under consideration are:

1. Requiring that incoming flocks be tested for *Salmonella* before entering an establishment;
2. Enhancing establishment process control monitoring and FSIS verification; and
3. Implementing an enforceable final product standard.

The proposed framework also addresses cross-cutting issues associated with testing for *Salmonella*, considerations for small and very small establishments, and data sharing.

An agenda will be published online before the public meeting. FSIS will finalize the agenda on or before the meeting date and post it on the FSIS website at:

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/news-events/events-meetings/public-meeting-reducing-salmonella-poultry>.

### **Registration and Meeting Materials**

There is no fee to register for the public meeting, but pre-registration is mandatory for participants attending. All attendees must register online by visiting <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/news-events/events-meetings/public-meeting-reducing-salmonella-poultry>, after which they will receive an email acknowledging their registration. Stakeholders who wish to speak at the meeting must notify FSIS during

registration and must register by October 24, 2022. Attendees that do not plan to speak at the public meeting may register at any time up to the day of the meeting.

### **Public Comments and Participation in Meetings**

#### *Public Comments: Oral Comments*

Stakeholders will have an opportunity to provide oral comments on any of the 4 components of the framework under consideration, i.e., the 3 components and cross-cutting issues, during the public meeting. Oral comments will be limited to two minutes per component. Attendees must identify which component (s) they will be commenting on when they register for the public meeting and will be allowed to comment on as many components as they wish. Due to the anticipated high level of interest in the opportunity to make public comments and the limited time available to do so, FSIS will do its best to accommodate all persons who pre-registered and requested to provide oral comments. Attendees that pre-register will be allotted time to speak in the order of registration. FSIS will notify stakeholders that register to speak of the approximate time(s) they are scheduled to speak in advance of the meeting. As noted above, stakeholders will be allotted a maximum of 2 minutes to comment on each framework component, but the comment periods will take place at different times over the course of the day. FSIS encourages persons and groups who have similar interests to consolidate their information for presentation by a single representative.

Stakeholders who do not notify FSIS during registration of their wish to speak will not have the opportunity to comment on a specific framework component on the day of the public meeting. However, there will be an open comment period for general questions or comments at the end of the meeting. Stakeholders may also submit written comments using the instructions in the Addresses section above.

#### *Panel Discussions*

During the meeting, stakeholders will be organized into groups to present their oral comments for each framework component to panels comprised of FSIS leadership and experts. The primary purpose of the panels is to listen to stakeholder input, but panelists may ask questions of the stakeholders if clarification is needed.

#### **Transcripts**

As soon as the meeting transcripts are available, they will be accessible on the FSIS website at:

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/news-events/events-meetings/public-meeting-reducing-salmonella-poultry>. The transcripts may also be viewed at the FSIS Docket Room at the address listed above.

#### **USDA Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, USDA, its Mission Areas, agencies, staff offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race,



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Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language) should contact the responsible Mission Area, agency, or staff office; the USDA TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY); or the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a Form [AD-3027](#), *USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form*, which can be obtained online at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-3027>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

(1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

(2) Fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

(3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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**Paul Kiecker,**  
*Administrator.*