

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE  
WASHINGTON, DC

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# FSIS NOTICE

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40-16

6/8/16

## QUESTIONNAIRE ON CONSUMER COMPLAINTS REGARDING FOREIGN MATERIAL

### I. PURPOSE

This notice instructs inspection program personnel (IPP) at all Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) regulated facilities (meat and poultry establishments and processed egg product plants) to complete a Profile Questionnaire in the Public Health Information System (PHIS) to record whether the facility has a written program in place to capture, evaluate, and respond to consumer complaints regarding foreign material, including establishment customers (e.g., institutions such as hospitals or nursing homes, restaurants, schools, grocery stores, distributors, or wholesalers).

### II. BACKGROUND

A. [FSIS Directive 5010.1](#), *Food Safety Related Topics for Discussion During Weekly Meetings with Establishment Management*, provides IPP with topics they may discuss at the weekly meetings with establishments. Section III. D. states that “*In addition, there can be discussion of information from external sources, such as customer or consumer complaints, that can provide information to alert establishment management about a safety risk or about other information that is relevant to the establishment’s food safety system*”. Additionally, Section III. F. 6. a. states that a possible topic for discussion includes: “*Complaints from consumers or establishment customers (e.g., institutions such as hospitals or nursing homes, restaurants, schools, grocery stores, distributors, or wholesalers).*”

B. IPP will provide answers to several “yes or no” questions as a part of the Profile Questionnaire in PHIS. FSIS headquarters staff will analyze the task responses to determine the next phase and to inform policy development.

### III. PHIS PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

A. IPP will receive a PHIS profile questionnaire to be completed one time between July 11, 2016, and August 11, 2016. IPP are to obtain from establishment management answers to the questions below. IPP have 1 hour to complete this one time survey.

B. IPP are to complete a questionnaire for each establishment on his or her assignment. In multiple inspector assignments and multiple shift establishments, the supervisor will assign one inspector to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire includes:

1. Does the facility have a process to gather and evaluate all consumer complaints regarding foreign material associated with that facility and maintain this information in a written document?

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**DISTRIBUTION:** Electronic

**NOTICE EXPIRES:** 7/1/17

**OPI:** OPPD

2. Does the facility have a written description of the actions it takes for all consumer complaints regarding foreign material, including when it takes no action and why?
3. Are the written documents referenced in 1 and 2 available to IPP for review upon request?

#### IV. ACCESSING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

To access the questionnaire, IPP are to:

1. From the PHIS Navigation Menu, select **Establishment Profile > Select Establishment;**
2. Search for and select the establishment;
3. On the PHIS Navigation Menu, click **Profile Questionnaire;**
4. On the page that appears, look for **Consumer Complaints Survey;**
5. To begin the questionnaire, click the **Open** link;
6. On the Welcome to the FSIS Questionnaire page, click **Start;**
7. Complete the questionnaire by answering each question;
8. After answering all questions, click **Next** to go to the Submit page and click **Submit;** and
9. To return to the establishment profile, click the **Establishment Profile** menu item on the left side of the screen.

#### V. DATA ANALYSIS

The Office of Policy and Program Development, in conjunction with other program areas, will review the PHIS data on a regular basis using the specific phrases outlined in Section III above and compare the results to other internal Consumer Complaint data sources, such as the Consumer Complaint Monitoring System. OPPD will also work with the Agricultural Marketing Service to assess whether there is relevant data that can be used in a cooperative analysis.

#### VI. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice to the Policy Development Staff through [askFSIS](#) or by telephone at 1-800-233-3935. When submitting a question, use the Submit a Question tab, and enter the following information in the fields provided:

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|-----------------|--|
| Subject Field:  | Enter <b>Notice 40-16</b>  |
| Question Field: | Enter question with as much detail as possible.                  |
| Product Field:  | Select <b>General Inspection Policy</b> from the drop-down menu. |
| Category Field: | Select <b>Sampling</b> from the drop-down menu.                  |
| Policy Arena:   | Select <b>Domestic (U.S.) Only</b> from the drop-down menu.      |

When all fields are complete, press **Continue** and at the next screen press **Finish Submitting Question**.

**NOTE:** Refer to [FSIS Directive 5620.1](#), *Using askFSIS*, for additional information on submitting questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Joseph". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end.

Assistant Administrator  
Office of Policy and Program Development