



FSIS Reaches Key Milestones in Protecting Public Health

On Dec. 21, 2017, FSIS announced its key 2017 achievements in protecting public health, preventing foodborne illness and promoting confidence in the U.S. food supply. In 2017, FSIS inspected more than 155 million head of livestock and 9.45 billion poultry carcasses. FSIS inspectors also conducted 6.9 million food safety and food defense procedures across 6,500 regulated establishments to ensure that meat, poultry and processed egg products were safe and wholesome.

FSIS continued its multipronged approach to combat *Salmonella* in fiscal year (FY) 2017. FSIS continued sampling of poultry carcasses, established new pathogen reduction standards for *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in comminuted poultry and chicken parts. FSIS also sampled raw beef while continuing the sampling program for *Salmonella* in pork products to determine the presence and levels of *Salmonella* in five types of processed pork products.

FSIS continued to strengthen coordination of federal foodborne outbreak response responsibilities with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In collaboration with our partners, FSIS bolstered its approach to preventing illnesses and deaths associated with multistate foodborne outbreaks by stopping outbreaks rapidly, when they occur and by preventing future foodborne outbreaks.

FSIS continued its initiatives to modernize operations and inspection systems. FSIS continued to modernize poultry inspection under the New Poultry Inspection System (NPIS) through its science-based, preventive approach poultry inspection. In 2017, FSIS continued to achieve successful conversion of poultry establishments that chose to opt-in to NPIS. FSIS regulations, which were revised under NPIS rulemaking, mandate that all poultry establishments – even those that do not opt-in to NPIS – take steps to prevent contamination, rather than addressing contamination after it has occurred.

FSIS also enhanced its science-based approach to illness prevention with the introduction of whole genome sequencing. This technology will allow the Agency to accurately identify and respond to outbreaks, enrich collaborations with other federal and state agencies and conduct efficient illness investigations back to the source.

FSIS successfully implemented inspection of Siluriformes fish by transitioning regulatory oversight from the FDA to FSIS. Following an 18-month transition period, full implementation of Siluriformes inspection began Sept. 1, 2017. In addition, 100 percent re-inspection of imported shipments of Siluriformes fish began Aug. 2, 2017.

Continues on Page 2

In This Issue

- 1 FSIS Reaches Key Milestones in Protecting Public Health
- 1 Export Requirements Updates
- 2 FSIS Posts Updated Residue Sampling Plans “Blue Book” for 2018
- 3 FSIS Announces the Availability of Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Sampling Plan
- 3 PHIS Export Component Information for Industry Available on FSIS Website
- 3 Special Holiday Message

Export Requirements Updates

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

- Costa Rica
- European Union
- Guatemala
- Israel
- Mexico
- Vietnam

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

... FSIS Reaches Key

Continued from Page 1

In FY 2017, FSIS protected public health by preventing the entrance of, or removing over, 715,000 pounds of adulterated or ineligible imported Siluriformes product from U.S. commerce.

FSIS conducted equivalence determinations, audited foreign country systems and reinspected imported products to ensure that all imported products are safe and wholesome for American families. In 2017, FSIS completed ongoing equivalence verification audits of 17 countries to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Currently more than 185 establishments and 33 countries are deemed eligible by FSIS. In 2017, approximately four billion pounds of meat and poultry products were presented for FSIS re-inspection from the eligible countries that are actively exporting product to the United States.

Outreach is an important part of FSIS' efforts to inform and educate a variety of audiences (including consumers and regulated industry) on FSIS policies, activities, and foodborne illness prevention. In addition, our outreach is critical to our continued efforts to modernize and ensure that small and very small plants have access to resources and valuable FSIS guidance. To ensure that regulated establishments have clear information from FSIS, the agency issued guidance to the industry on several critical topics, including how to label product correctly and support those labeling claims. Additionally, the agency posted guidance to further assist establishments in distinguishing whether or not a label needs to be submitted for FSIS approval.

FSIS provided consumer information through new and enhanced channels including Pinterest and extended hours of operation for the USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline. For more information on these milestones, please visit: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/ffsis/newsroom/news-releases-statements-transcripts/news-release-archives-by-year/archive/2017/Inr-122117-01>.

FSIS Posts Updated Residue Sampling Plans "Blue Book" for 2018

FSIS is announcing the posting of the publication, *United States National Residue Program for Meat, Poultry and Egg Products – 2018 Residue Sampling Plans (Blue Book)*. The publication is the latest version of the "Blue Book," which outlines the residue sampling plans for 2018. The publication describes the 2018 National Residue Program using the three-tier sampling system initiated in 2012 that identifies the various production classes and compounds FSIS is analyzing, provides access to current methodology and explains the fiscal year reporting cycle. Posting the "Blue Book" is done to provide transparency on U.S. residue sampling of meat, poultry and egg products. For more information, visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/0d633930-b5fa-4db1-965c-4f4769827301/2018-Blue-Book.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

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FSIS Announces the Availability of the Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Sampling Plan

A key FSIS inspection verification activity is the sampling of product for microbiological contaminants or chemical residues. FSIS released the *Report on the Food Safety and Inspection Service Microbiological and Residue Sampling Programs* in December 2011, which identified all of FSIS' sampling programs and discussed the statistical and policy basis for the programs. FSIS has released a new sampling plan for each subsequent fiscal year. These sampling plans continued FSIS' efforts to comprehensively identify the Agency's microbiological and chemical residue sampling activities and consider them in light of data-driven strategic planning efforts. The Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Sampling Plan is available at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/43ac799e-6fc0-4dd6-b1c9-237047ff7e67/Sampling-Program-Plan-FY2018.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

PHIS Export Component Information for Industry Available on FSIS Website

Beginning in June 2018, FSIS intends to provide automated export documentation to Afghanistan, Andorra, Australia, Bahamas, Bolivia, Burundi, Cape Verde, Cook Islands, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Mozambique, New Zealand, Paraguay, San Marino, Tanzania, Uganda and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and then gradually expand implementation to additional countries.

In preparation for this, FSIS has been working with industry to test the Export functionality in the Public Health Information System (PHIS). As a reminder to those working to develop their XML schema to support the export application batch processing, the test environment will continue to be accessible until Jan. 5, 2018. The Agency will make available the Industry Training Environment (ITE) in mid-February 2018 to test the entire automated export functionality and continue developing the XML schema.

Information about these efforts and the Export component is available on the FSIS website at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/inspection/phis/phis>. Please continue to monitor this website for any upcoming information. For all questions and issues concerning the XML schema development, please continue to contact the FSIS Service Desk at 800-473-9135, then select prompt 1, followed by prompt 3. For other questions concerning the PHIS export functionality, industry may submit those to PHISTechnicalQA@fsis.usda.gov.

*The FSIS Constituent Update will not publish on Dec. 29, 2017.
Publishing will resume on Jan. 5, 2018.*

The staff wishes you a happy, safe and healthy holiday.