



Food Safety and Inspection Service

International Equivalence Update

Mary Stanley
Director, International Relations and
Strategic Planning Staff
Office of Policy and Program Development
January 7, 2014

Food Safety and Inspection Service

FSIS provided an overview of progress made to incorporate the recommendations from the 2008 NACMPI Meeting on International Equivalence

- Maintain its three-part approach to equivalence**
 - ✓ **Document review, on-site systems audits, POE re-inspection**

- Direct Agency resources according to the relative risks and historical compliance presented by each foreign food regulatory system**

- Standardize its methods for collecting information from foreign governments**
 - ✓ **Self-Reporting Tool (SRT)**

Food Safety and Inspection Service

FSIS On-going Equivalence

- ❑ Published the performance-based approach for determining scope and frequency of its on-site audits and POE inspections
 - ✓ *Performance-based Approach to Foreign Country Equivalence Verification Audits and Point of Entry (POE) Re-inspections (posted with the FR notice)*

- ❑ In process of in-depth review of internal SOPs as a result of recent Agency reorganization
 - ✓ OPPD—International Equivalence Staff
 - ✓ OIEA—International Audit Staff
 - ✓ OFO—Import Inspection Management Division

Food Safety and Inspection Service

Published *Federal Register* Notice—January 25, 2013

- *On-going Equivalence Verifications of Foreign Food Regulatory Systems*

In summary, FSIS continues to use a three-part approach that includes:

- 1) Document reviews, 2) on-site system audits and 3) port-of-entry (POE) re-inspections.
 - ✓ FSIS determines the scope and frequency of on-site systems audits and POE re-inspections through analysis of the results of its document reviews and an assessment of a country's performance.
 - ✓ This performance-based approach allows FSIS to direct its resources to foreign food regulatory systems that pose greater risk to public health compared to others; make its international program more consistent with its domestic inspection system; and improve the linkage between POE re-inspections and on-site audits. As a result, FSIS is able to effectively prevent unsafe imports from entering this country.

Food Safety and Inspection Service

Next Steps—2014

- Respond to comments received on Docket No. 2012-0049 in the *Federal Register*, including:
 - ✓ Maintaining and analyzing up-to-date information collected from the foreign country
 - ✓ Clarifying rationale for less frequent on-audits for well performing foreign countries
 - ✓ Addressing lack of transparency for on-going International equivalence
 - Posting audit reports in a timely fashion
- Publication of FSIS Directives or Notices on:
 - ✓ Initial and On-going Equivalence
 - ✓ International Audits



Food Safety and Inspection Service

Contact Information

USDA/FSIS
Office of Policy and Program Development
International Relations and Strategic Planning Staff
(202) 690-4354

Mary Stanley, Director
Mary.Stanley@fsis.usda.gov