



Argentina Eligible to Export Raw Beef Products to the U.S.

FSIS reviewed Argentina’s documented inspection program for raw beef and conducted an on-site verification audit of Argentina’s beef slaughter and further processing from Nov. 29 – Dec. 13, 2016, and has concluded that Argentina has implemented a raw beef product inspection system that is equivalent to that of the United States (U.S.) inspection system. After the audit, FSIS continued to work with Argentina to clarify issues and verify that the country’s inspection system for raw beef products is equivalent to FSIS’ inspection system. FSIS and Argentina resolved all issues, and FSIS has verified the country’s inspection system for these products is equivalent to FSIS’ system. FSIS has, therefore, reinstated Argentina’s eligibility to export raw beef derived from cattle slaughtered on and after Nov. 27, 2018 to the U.S.

Argentina has been ineligible to export raw beef products to the U.S. due to animal health restrictions imposed by USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD). Argentina requested that FSIS reinstate its eligibility to export raw beef to the U.S. following the 2014 USDA APHIS rule that lifted restrictions on the importation of raw beef from certain regions of Argentina, which APHIS classified as free of rinderpest and FMD. In 2015, APHIS determined that the remaining regions of Argentina could safely export raw beef under certain conditions.

Within six months of this reinstatement, FSIS will conduct an additional onsite audit of Argentina’s inspection system for raw beef products. The 2016 FSIS audit report is available at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/6034bff4-bc1b-4ca1-9c46-53fc30301e7c/Argentina-2016-FAR.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

Policy Update

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

Notice 64-18 - Eligibility of Argentina to Export Raw Beef to the United States

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FSIS Releases FY 2019 Sampling Program Plans and New Catalog of Sampling Projects

On Nov. 30, 2018, FSIS released the Annual Sampling Program Plan and Residue Sampling Plans for fiscal year 2019 and the 2018 Annual Catalog of FSIS Sampling Projects.

The Annual Sampling Program Plan identifies changes planned for FY2019 to FSIS' various sampling programs and describes the agency's overall strategy for directing its sampling resources. FSIS also published the 2019 Residue Sampling Plans, which provide information on the process of sampling meat, poultry and egg products for chemical compounds of public concern and data collection.

FSIS first released its "Food Safety and Inspection Service Microbiological and Residue Sampling Programs" report 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.

FSIS is also launching a new online Annual Catalog of FSIS Sampling Projects — a searchable list of sampling projects for meat, poultry and egg products. The catalog, which will include project names and codes, will inform the public of what type of sampling data are available through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). With this catalog, FSIS seeks to enhance the customer experience by strengthening the FOIA process related to these data.

The catalog, which will be updated annually, and the FY 2019 Annual Sampling Program Plan are available at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/data-collection-and-reports/fsis-data-analysis-and-reporting/data-reporting/fsis-data-analysis-and-reporting#samplingprograms> and the 2019 Residue Sampling Plans at https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/data-collection-and-reports/chemistry/blue-books/ct_index.

Shawna Newsome Named as New Chief of Staff for Food Safety

Effective Dec. 3, 2018, Shawna Newsome will serve as the new chief of staff in the Office of Food Safety. Recently, Shawna served as a legislative assistant to Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY). Her extensive knowledge of the legislative process and regulatory framework helped manage legislative work related to international trade where the senator is a senior member of the Senate Finance Committee. Additionally, Shawna served as the primary policy advisor on issues related to agriculture, public lands, and labor.

Shawna grew up in Riverview, Florida, and is the fourth generation of her family involved in production agriculture. She graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in food and resource economics and completed her master's degree from Texas Tech University where her graduate research focused on decreasing the prevalence of foodborne pathogens in packing plants in Mexico and Latin America. With a passion for the agriculture industry, she moved to Washington, D.C., in 2013 for a position with the National Cattlemen's Beef Association where she led communications strategy and contributed to policy development.

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

Assistant Administrator
Carol Blake

Deputy Assistant Administrator
Aaron Lavallee

Director
Roxanne Smith

Editor
Veronika Pfaeffle

Export Requirements Updates

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

Egypt
New Caledonia
Peru
South Africa
Western Samoa

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

FSIS to Modernize Microbiological Testing System for Pathogens

FSIS will begin updating its diagnostic capabilities for microbiological testing of *Salmonella*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, and Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* with new rapid molecular screening technology. FSIS is continuing to take important steps to modernize our systems and processes to use the best available science, save taxpayer money, and create efficiencies in government. The implementation, which will be done in phases, is expected to start within the next two months in the three FSIS laboratories.

FSIS will use several new testing kits to test regulatory samples for foodborne pathogens. The 3M™ Molecular Detection System will be used to screen enriched samples for *Salmonella* species and *Listeria monocytogenes* and Bio-Rad iQ-Check® will be used to screen enriched samples for *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 and adulterant non-O157 Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (non-O157 STEC). The laboratories will continue to use the Hygiena BAX® System to screen enriched samples for *Campylobacter* species and certain target microorganisms as part of the National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS). The adoption of this multi-platform screening plan will not only result in cost savings for FSIS, but will also reduce the time that establishments have to wait to obtain results on certain screened samples. FSIS will update the FSIS Microbiology Laboratory Guidebook (MLG) once the changes are fully implemented in early 2019.

Reminder: U.S.-Canada RCC Stakeholder Forum to be Held Next Week

On Dec. 4-5, 2018, the Regulatory Cooperation Council (RCC) Stakeholder Forum will bring together senior regulatory officials, industry, and other members of the public from both sides of the U.S-Canada border. Canadian and U.S. regulators will provide progress reports on existing regulatory cooperation efforts and solicit public input on new opportunities for regulatory cooperation. The RCC promotes economic growth, innovation, competitiveness, and job creation through the elimination of unnecessary regulatory differences between our two countries.

The forum will take place at the Washington Convention Center at 801 Mt. Vernon Place, NW, Washington, D.C., 20001. Additional information and an agenda is available at: <https://www.trade.gov/rcc>. To RSVP, click [here](#).

For questions about the registration or in general, please contact rcd-dcmr@tbs-sct.gc.ca or international-OIRA@omb.eop.gov.