

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

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<b>FSIS NOTICE</b>	20-20	4/21/20
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**SAMPLING SUPPLIES TO INCLUDE NON-STERILE EXAMINATION GLOVES**

**I. PURPOSE**

This notice informs inspection program personnel (IPP) that the FSIS Field Laboratories will begin providing non-sterile examination gloves in official sampling supplies and will discontinue the distribution of sterile surgical gloves. When the current supply of sterile gloves runs out, FSIS will begin providing non-sterile examination gloves for all official sample collection tasks assigned through the Public Health Information System (PHIS) in which sterile surgical gloves have previously been distributed by FSIS Field Laboratories. In addition, this notice informs IPP that FSIS will no longer include gloves in Ready to Eat (RTE) product sampling supplies.

**II. BACKGROUND**

A. For each FSIS sample collection task, FSIS Field Laboratories provide IPP with a supply box containing items to perform the assigned sample collection task. Currently, these supply boxes contain a pack of sterile surgical gloves that IPP are to use during sampling collection.

B. FSIS is phasing out its supply of sterile surgical gloves. There is no scientific or regulatory requirement to provide sterile gloves typically used for surgery for sample collection. Non-sterile examination gloves purchased under contract by FSIS are certified by the manufacturer to protect against the penetration of blood-borne pathogens and to protect the sample collector.

C. Sending non-sterile examination gloves to IPP is consistent with the practices of FSIS laboratory personnel, who also use non-sterile examination gloves as Personal Protective Equipment. Years of use of these types of gloves in FSIS Field Service laboratories have demonstrated that they are sufficient to prevent cross-contamination of samples as long as proper aseptic technique is utilized.

**III. INSTRUCTIONS FOR IPP**

A. IPP are to continue the completion of sampling tasks assigned through PHIS.

B. FSIS will no longer include gloves in Ready to Eat (RTE) product sampling supplies. As instructed in [FSIS Directive 10240.1](#), IPP are to collect RTE products in the establishment's packaging. IPP are not to have direct contact with the exposed, unpackaged RTE product. If domestic RTE product samples are slack filled or short weighted, packaging is performed by establishment personnel or equipment in establishment supplied packaging.

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**DISTRIBUTION:** Electronic

**NOTICE EXPIRES:** 5/1/21

**OPI:** OPPD

C. For other samples, non-sterile exam gloves will arrive in the supply kit in secondary containment, and must remain in their separate package until IPP are prepared to don gloves for sampling.

D. Consistent with current donning instructions for sterile gloves available on [IPP Help](#), IPP are to thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water before donning non-sterile examination gloves. IPP are to prevent contamination of the external surface of the gloves before or during the sample collection process. IPP are to rewash their hands and change gloves, as necessary, to prevent the contamination of any FSIS product samples.

E. FSIS employees are to follow all relevant sample collection instructions, as set out in the appropriate FSIS Directives or FSIS Notices for any specific sampling task, with the substitution of non-sterile exam gloves for sterile gloves in those instructions.

## V. QUESTIONS

Refer questions regarding this notice to the Office of Policy and Program Development 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:

Subject Field: Enter **Notice 20-20**.  
Question Field: Enter question with as much detail as possible.  
Product Field: Select **General Inspection Policy** from the drop-down menu.  
Category Field: Select **Public Health Information System (PHIS)** from the drop-down menu.  
Policy Arena: Select **Domestic** from the drop-down menu.

When all fields are complete, press **Continue**.

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



Acting Assistant Administrator  
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