

Scheduling of Plants for New Poultry Inspection System Implementation

Poultry slaughter establishments will transition to the new inspection method via a phased approach. Many factors affect the placement of an establishment in the phased schedule. FSIS is using the following rubric to create the initial ranking. This initial ranking then will be adjusted based on operational requirements to determine the implementation schedule.

Scheduling Rubric

1. The phased approach will consist of a group of establishments to be transitioned in waves
 - The size of the waves will be informed both by operational considerations and by the establishment rankings
2. All establishments that have opted into the new inspection system by the date in the notice will be ranked¹
 - Each establishment will get assigned a weighted score
 1. Establishments will be ranked by their scores
 2. Higher scores will initially put establishments at the top of the rankings
 3. Establishments with the same score are randomly ordered
 - First, establishments will be scored using a computer algorithm. The algorithm will aggregate past performance and employee information to generate an initial ranking.
 - The number of FSIS employees who will be affected
 - Higher numbers of affected employees will increase the score
 - The past performance of the establishment
 - Noncompliance Reports (NRs)
 - Laboratory sampling results
 - Enforcement action history
 - Fewer NRs, positive samples, and enforcement actions will increase the score
 - Establishments are then ranked via the aggregated score
 - Second, the computer algorithm will adjust the establishment rankings according to establishment location
 - The location of an establishment in relation to other establishments converting to new poultry inspection will be used
 - When possible, establishments within 35 driving miles of a higher ranked establishment will be grouped with that establishment
 - Finally, manual adjustments may be made to the rankings to ensure other relevant factors are considered
 - The distribution of establishments from common owners will be examined and adjusted if necessary to ensure a balanced implementation

¹ FSIS intends to begin implementation as soon as possible once all obligations have been met. If this is prior to the end of the six month opt-in period, FSIS will re-rank all establishments that have opted to participate on a monthly basis through the six month period.

- The schedule will be adjusted to ensure that establishments are not transitioned before they are ready to implement²
 - The schedule may be adjusted because of operational considerations (e.g. availability of training, coverage inspectors, etc)
- 3. Establishments that opt into the new inspection system after the initial six-month period will be accommodated as Agency resources and readiness allow
- 4. During implementation, FSIS will continually monitor the process, which may result in changes to the schedule due to operational needs

² Part of the information that FSIS intends to collect with establishments opt into new inspection will be the date when the establishment will be ready to transition to new inspection.