



## FSIS and Iowa Sign Cooperative Interstate Shipment Agreement

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the State of Iowa have finalized a Cooperative Interstate Shipment (CIS) agreement. The agreement was carefully reviewed and approved by FSIS over an 11-month period and will allow the State of Iowa to operate a CIS program, which provides an opportunity for certain state-inspected meat and poultry processors to ship their products across state lines.

The CIS program promotes the expansion of business opportunities for state-inspected meat and poultry establishments. Under CIS, state-inspected plants can operate as federally inspected facilities, under specific conditions, and ship their product in interstate commerce.

The CIS program is limited to plants located in the 27 states that have established a Meat and Poultry Inspection Program (MPI) and maintain “at least equal to” FSIS regulatory standards. The assigned state inspectors under the “at least equal to” program will remain as the plant’s onsite inspectors, provided they have the same training and inspect the plant under “the same” regulatory standards as their federal counterparts in FSIS-inspected plants. FSIS provides on-going oversight of the CIS program to ensure that participating states maintain and operate their “same as” programs in a manner that complies with all applicable federal statutes and regulations and follows FSIS directives and notices. FSIS also verifies that selected establishments in the CIS participating state remain eligible to participate in the CIS program.

The CIS program was created by the 2008 Farm Bill and since then, FSIS has signed agreements with Indiana, Maine, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, and Wisconsin. For more information about CIS, visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/cis>.

## COVID-19 FAQs

Make sure to review our Frequently Asked Questions at <https://www.usda.gov/coronavirus/food-supply-chain>. New this week:

1. In some areas of meat and poultry processing facilities, social distancing at 6 feet of distance may not be feasible in order to maintain continued operation at the maximum capacity possible. In these areas, are other controls, based on the hierarchy of controls outlined in the CDC/OSHA guidance, e.g. PPE, acceptable in order to maintain safe operations at the maximum capacity possible?

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# Tips for Faster Label Approval Process

On Labels are currently taking **about 5-7** business days to evaluate.

**TIP: When using a new organic certifier, an establishment may update prior approved meat and poultry labels bearing an organic claim by submitting a letter to FSIS in lieu of a new label application for review and approval.**

FSIS has procedures in place that allow for an establishment to update a previously approved label bearing an organic claim with a new organic certifier without resubmitting the label for review and approval.

Under these procedures, the producing establishment may submit a signed and dated notification letter to FSIS by email to [Kierra.Lucas@usda.gov](mailto:Kierra.Lucas@usda.gov) or hard copy mail (see link below) that includes the following:

- The producing establishment's name, address, and establishment number;
- The prior label approval number(s) and a copy of the previously approved label application(s);
- A copy of the current organic certificate; and
- A copy of the new organic certificate.

Once FSIS has reviewed and accepted the documentation, the agency will notify the establishment in writing of its receipt and recognition of the change in organic certifier. After receipt of the FSIS confirmation letter, the establishment may make the required modification to change the name of the certifying entity's name under the signature line on the label. Although it is not required, the establishment may also add the certifying entity's website address and logo, as applicable, to the label with the new certifying entity's name. These label changes made after receipt of the FSIS confirmation letter are generically approved. The establishment must include the new organic certificate in the label application on file.

For FSIS mailing addresses, which differ depending on the mail service used, visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/labeling/labeling-procedures/label-application-guidance>.

For more information about organic labeling claims and other special statements and claims see the FSIS Labeling Guideline on Documentation Needed to Substantiate Animal Raising Claims for Label Submissions at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/6fe3cd56-6809-4239-b7a2-bccb82a30588/RaisingClaims.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.

FSIS will continue to provide updates regarding label turnaround time, as well as suggestions to assist industry to streamline label submissions in its *Constituent Update*.

## Export Requirements Update

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

China, People's Republic of  
Dominican Republic  
Korea, Republic of  
Mexico  
Oman

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

# Though Memorial Day Celebrations Are Different This Year, Food Safety Remains a Priority

Every year, millions of Americans commemorate Memorial Day to honor the sacrifices so many have made to protect our country. This holiday weekend might not be like past years, so while we keep public health recommendations in mind, let's not forget food safety practices to prevent foodborne illnesses.

For those that choose to celebrate outdoors, FSIS has important food safety tips to keep your outdoor activities safe and fun this Memorial Day weekend. For more information, visit <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/newsroom/news-releases-statements-transcripts/news-release-archives-by-year/archive/2020/nr-05212020-01>.

## 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:

**FSIS Notice 29-20** - Cancellation of FSIS Directives