



FSIS to Expand STEC Testing to Additional Raw Beef Products

FSIS is expanding its routine verification testing for six non-O157 Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) to ground beef, bench trim, and other raw ground beef components (e.g., cheek meat) to further protect public health. The six non-O157 STEC are O26, O45, O103, O111, O121, and O145 and are considered adulterants under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA). Currently, FSIS analyzes all ground beef, bench trim, and other raw ground beef components for *E. coli* O157:H7, but only tests its beef manufacturing trimmings samples for the six non-O157 STEC.

FSIS also intends to test for the non-O157 STEC in ground beef samples that it already collects at retail stores and in applicable samples it already collects of imported raw beef products. Samples of ground beef, bench trim, and other raw ground beef components already collected at official establishments would also be tested for the six non-O157 STEC. FSIS estimates that benefits of the new testing will be reduced foodborne illnesses and deaths, as well as reduced outbreak-related recalls.

FSIS is requesting comments on the proposed sampling and testing for ground beef, bench trim, and other raw ground beef components. Interested persons must submit comments on this notice by August 3, 2020. Comments may be submitted by one of the following methods: Federal eRulemaking portal, available at <http://www.regulations.gov>; by mail sent to Docket Clerk, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mailstop 3758, Room 6065, Washington, D.C., 20250-3700. All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the agency name and docket number FSIS-2010-0023.

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Export Requirements Update

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

Australia
Malaysia
Vietnam

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

Tips for Faster Label Approval Process

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

TIP: Labels bearing “Halal” and “Kosher” claims do not require submission for approval by FSIS unless the claims are identified on the label as certified.

Labels bearing a factual claim that the product was produced according to ritual slaughter (e.g., kosher, halal) or further processed under the supervision of the same religious authority are eligible for generic approval and do not have to be submitted to FSIS for approval unless the label bears other special statements or claims. However, if the claim is explicitly identified as “certified” on the label, then the establishment must submit the label to FSIS for approval.

For example, if a ground beef label simply declares a product as “Halal” with no additional qualification and the label does not require submission for FSIS approval for the reasons in 9 CFR 412.1 (e.g., temporary approval, special statements or claims), then the label is generically approved if it complies with applicable labeling requirements. However, the ground beef label would have to be submitted to FSIS if it bears a “Certified Halal” claim. When submitting a label with a “Certified Kosher” or “Certified Halal” claim to FSIS, the establishment must include a current certificate with the application to support the claim. The label must either include 1) the name of the individual or organization certifying the product or 2) the website of the certifier. The individual/organization certifying the product, or the website of the certifier must be on the same panel as the claim.

For additional information about special statements or claims requiring FSIS approval and factual statements and claims that may be applied generically to a label, please see the *FSIS Compliance Guideline for Label Approval* at <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/bf170761-33e3-4a2d-8f86-940c2698e2c5/Label-Approval-Guide.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*.

NACMCF to Hold Subcommittee Meetings

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) will hold subcommittee meetings on June 11 and July 15. The Subcommittee on Appropriate Product Testing Procedures and Criteria to Verify Process Control for Microbial Pathogens in Ready-To-Eat (RTE) Foods will convene a teleconference subcommittee meeting on June 11, 2020, from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET and on July 15, 2020, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ET.

The subcommittee will discuss its progress, and plan and coordinate subsequent meetings through the end of 2020.

There will be no in-person participation. To attend the teleconference, please contact Karen Thomas, Advisory Committee Specialist, at 202-690-6620, or by email at karen.thomas@usda.gov.

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

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Policy Updates

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 updates were recently issued:

FSIS Directive 12600.2 Rev. 2 - Reimbursable Overtime Inspection Services for Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products

Docket No. FSIS-2010-0023 - Expansion of FSIS Shiga Toxin-Producing Escherichia coli (STEC) Testing to Additional Raw Beef Products

Docket No. FSIS-2019-0028 - Inspection of Yak and Other Bovidae, Cervidae, and Camelidae Species

Docket No. FSIS-2020-0005 - Elimination of the Requirement To Defibrinate Livestock Blood Saved as an Edible Product