



FSIS Proposes to Define Yak as Exotic Animal Eligible for Voluntary Inspection

FSIS is proposing to amend its regulations to define yak and include it among “exotic animals” eligible for voluntary inspection and the USDA voluntary mark of inspection.

Yak is not listed in the regulations as an exotic animal, but the agency has been providing voluntary inspection services for yak for many years. Amending the regulations would avoid disruption to the yak industry and the possible economic harm to producers if the agency stopped voluntarily inspecting yak. FSIS will continue to voluntarily inspect yak during the rulemaking process.

The agency is seeking public comments on the proposed rule. Additionally, FSIS is seeking public comment on whether the regulations should be amended to list all farmed-raised species in the biological families Cervidae (e.g., moose, all deer and elk), all Bovidae except those subject to mandatory inspection (e.g., bison, buffalo, water buffalo and impalas), and certain Camelidae (e.g., camel, llama, and alpaca) as eligible for voluntary inspection.

FSIS invites interested persons to submit comments on the proposed rule. Comments must be received by July 31, 2020. Comments may be submitted online via the 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; or by hand or courier delivery to 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 6065, Washington, D.C., 20250-3700. All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the agency name and docket number FSIS-2019-0008. Comments received in response to this docket will be made available for public inspection and posted without change, including any personal information, to <http://www.regulations.gov>.

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Export Requirements Update

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

- Belarus
- Brazil
- Canada
- Faroe Islands
- Japan

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

FSIS Proposes Rule to Eliminate Defibrination of Livestock Blood

FSIS is proposing a rule to remove the requirement that establishments defibrinate livestock blood collected for human food. This would allow the collection of coagulated livestock blood for use in specialty food products.

FSIS conducted a review of the peer-reviewed literature regarding coagulated blood and did not identify any scientifically supportable food safety concerns. The agency believes that the defibrination requirement is unnecessary to ensure food safety in accordance with the Federal Meat Inspection Act. This updated position is because coagulated blood, like fluid blood, is safe for human consumption, provided it is saved from inspected and passed animals, and otherwise produced and prepared in compliance with all other FSIS regulations.

The proposed rule is expected to result in industry cost savings and would also allow industry to fulfill a demand for non-defibrinated blood products in niche markets.

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FSIS Announces Program Leadership Change

Rachel Edelstein has been named Assistant Administrator of the Office of Policy and Program Development (OPPD). She has held a number of leadership positions since joining FSIS in 1997. Most recently, Rachel served as the Deputy Assistant Administrator of OPPD. She has been instrumental in leading efforts to modernize regulations and improve instructions to FSIS field personnel. Rachel has a Bachelor of Arts in English from the College of William and Mary and a Master of Arts in English from the University of Virginia.

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:

Docket No. FSIS-2020-0018 - Notice of Request for Renewal of an Approved Information Collection (In-Home Food Safety Behaviors and Consumer Education: Web-Based Survey)

FSIS Directive 1050.1 Rev. 5 - Requesting Participation at Non-FSIS Sponsored Meetings and Events

FSIS Directive 9900.4 - Import Applications