



Special Alert

FSIS Modernizes Eggs Products Inspection

FSIS has announced that it is modernizing egg products inspection methods for the first time since Congress passed the Egg Products Inspection Act (EPIA) in 1970. The Egg Products Inspection Regulations final rule aligns the egg products regulations to be consistent with current requirements in the meat and poultry products inspection regulations.

Under the new rule, federally inspected egg products plants are required to develop and implement Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems and Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (SSOPs). FSIS will continue to test for *Salmonella* and *Listeria monocytogenes (Lm)* in egg products. FSIS requires that plants produce egg products that meet food safety standards and are edible without additional preparation and nothing in the final rule changes those requirements.

The rule aligns with FSIS' efforts to modernize scientific techniques, inspection procedures, and policies. This will improve flexibility and innovation for egg product plants in product creation, sampling techniques, and plant design. Furthermore, it will allow plants to adopt new technologies and procedures that enhance food safety.

Under the final rule, FSIS is assuming regulatory authority of egg substitutes and freeze-dried egg products, which pose the same risk as egg products and will be inspected in the same manner, enhancing the existing food safety system. These products are similar, if not identical, to currently amenable egg products and subject to the same food safety risks during processing. FSIS is requiring that these products be produced under FSIS inspection and jurisdiction and is phasing in requirements for these products over a 3-year period.

The agency has also realigned the regulations governing the importation and inspection of foreign egg products more closely with the regulations governing the importation of foreign meat and poultry products. FSIS will notify foreign countries of the regulatory changes. Countries that have ongoing equivalence and most countries that have requested initial equivalence for egg products already have HACCP implemented for egg products for their domestic products.

The new requirements will be phased in. FSIS is allowing domestic establishments 1 year to implement their SSOP procedures and 2 years to implement HACCP procedures. All other regulatory requirements, including those for the pasteurization of egg products, will take effect 60 days after publication of the final rule in the *Federal Register*. Eligible foreign countries will be given 3 years to implement both SSOP and HACCP procedures.

A pre-publication copy of the rule can be viewed [here](#).

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