



FSIS Highlights Accomplishments in Protecting Public Health

On Dec. 20, 2018, FSIS announced key 2018 achievements in protecting public health by ensuring the safety of meat, poultry and processed egg products.

In 2018, FSIS inspected more than 160 million head of livestock and 9.47 billion poultry carcasses, and conducted 6.9 million food safety and food defense tasks. FSIS continues to ensure that consumers have access to the safest meat and poultry supply in the world.

Some additional FSIS accomplishments include:

- **Targeting Foodborne Illness:** FSIS has continued to target sampling and use other strategies to control Shiga-toxin producing *E. coli*, *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Salmonella*, and *Campylobacter*. FSIS is continuing to use whole genome sequencing to track illness, inform inspection and policy decisions, and enhance our collaborations with sister agencies and state governments.
- **Collaboration:** Much of the agency's work is conducted in cooperation with federal, state and municipal agencies, as well as private industry. In 2018, FSIS continued to strengthen its collaboration with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to meet the agency's goal to improve coordination of federal food safety efforts and address cross-cutting priorities for food safety data.
- **Modernization:** In early January, FSIS proposed to amend the egg products inspection regulations by requiring official plants that process egg products to develop Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) systems and Sanitation Standard Operating Procedures (Sanitation SOPs) and to meet other sanitation requirements consistent with the meat and poultry regulations. Also in January, FSIS announced a proposed rule to modernize its swine slaughter inspection system, which is about five decades old. Additionally, FSIS proposed a number of deregulatory actions, including eliminating redundant regulations and taking a more science-based approach to regulatory controls. In February, FSIS published criteria that it will use to consider new waiver requests from young chicken establishments to operate at line speeds up to 175 bpm.

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- **Siluriformes Inspection:** FSIS began fully implementing the Siluriformes inspection program in September 2017, and moved quickly to finalize foreign country equivalence determinations. On Sept. 14, 2018, Vietnam, China and Thailand met the documentation and equivalence requirements to be able to ship Siluriformes to the United States.
- **Foreign Country Equivalence Oversight and Import Reinspection Programs:** In 2018, FSIS completed ongoing equivalence verification audits of 18 countries to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Approximately 4.4 billion pounds of meat and poultry products were presented for FSIS re-inspection from the eligible countries that are actively exporting product to the United States.
- **Outreach:** During 2018, FSIS saw major success in raising awareness of safe food handling guidance, recalls and information about foodborne illness. FSIS achieved more than 62 million impressions from media outreach, web page views, social media engagements, educational material distribution, app downloads and direct conversations. FSIS continued to provide outreach and technical resources to small and very small plants and launched an initiative to prioritize outreach to small and very small establishments through utilization of our Enforcement, Investigation and Analysis Officer (EIAO) field personnel with individuals on the hotline and in the field.
- **Emerging Technologies:** FSIS proactively worked with its federal partners to determine the next steps, including hosting a joint public meeting (October 23-24, 2018) with the FDA to discuss the use of cell culture technology to develop products derived from livestock and poultry. As a result, USDA and FDA are working jointly to oversee the production of cell-cultured food products derived from livestock and poultry in 2019.

For more information about the list of accomplishments and to find out what is coming in 2019, visit: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/newsroom/news-releases-statements-transcripts/news-release-archives-by-year/archive/2018/nr-122118-01>.

Special Message

The FSIS *Constituent Update* will not publish on Dec. 28, 2018. Publishing will resume on Jan. 4, 2019.

The staff wishes you a safe, happy and healthy holiday season.

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Reminder: Consumer Food Safety Education Conference to Be Held March 6-8, 2019

The Partnership for Food Safety Education will be holding its 2019 Consumer Food Safety Education conference from March 6-8, 2019, in Orlando, Florida. The conference, "From Consumers to Chefs: Food Safety Education Matters," will focus on take-away strategies for changing people's food safety knowledge and behaviors. More than 400 health and food safety educators are expected to attend to explore influences on consumers, how to effect behavior change, and discuss strategies to engage everyone in modeling proper food preparation and good hand hygiene practices. Information on how to register can be found at: <https://cfsec2019.fightbac.org/>.

Spread Holiday Cheer, Not Foodborne Illnesses This Season

If you're cooking for friends and family this holiday season, it's important to make sure you're not spreading bacteria that can cause harmful foodborne illnesses.

A recent study by FSIS and North Carolina State University found that Americans are practicing some disturbing food handling behaviors when it comes to preparing food at home. The study found that in the control group, 66 percent of participants did not use a thermometer to check the temperature of the ground turkey burgers. Even when participants did use a food thermometer, only 54 percent of turkey burgers reached the safe internal cooking temperature of 165°F.

Make sure you're protecting your family by not falling into bad food preparation habits. Always follow the four steps to food safety:

- Clean your hands thoroughly for a full 20 seconds with soapy water. Always serve food on clean plates and avoid reusing plates that previously held raw meat and poultry.
- Separate raw meat, poultry and egg products from ready-to-eat foods.
- Cook, using a food thermometer to make sure food reaches a safe minimum internal temperature:
 - Beef, pork, lamb and veal (steaks, chops and roasts): 145°F with a three minute rest.
 - Ground beef, pork, lamb and veal: 160°F.
 - Poultry (whole or ground): 165°F.
- Chill leftovers within two hours of cooking. Keep track of how long items have been sitting on the buffet table and discard anything that has been out longer than two hours.

For more information, visit: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/newsroom/news-releases-state-ments-transcripts/news-release-archives-by-year/archive/2018/nr-122118-01>.

Export Requirements Updates

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

- Barbados
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Cuba
- Curacao
- El Salvador
- European Union
- Guatemala
- Hong Kong
- India
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Kazakhstan
- Morocco
- New Caledonia
- Peru
- Republic of Korea
- Republic of Macedonia
- South Africa
- Ukraine
- Western Samoa

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

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:

Notice 67-18 - *Import Residue Sampling Types of Inspection*

Notice 68-18 - *Holidays in 2019*

Notice 69-18 - *Special Provisions for Pay Period 25*

Notice 70-18 - *Federal Government Closure on Monday December 24, 2018*

Docket No. FSIS-2018-0051 - *2019 Rate Changes for the Basetime, Overtime, Holiday, and Laboratory Services Rates*