FSIS DIRECTIVE	10,200.1	7/19/01

Accessing Laboratory Sample Information via LEARN

I.   PURPOSE

What is the purpose of this directive?

The purpose of this directive is to instruct FSIS personnel in how to use the Laboratory Electronic Application for Results Notification (LEARN) system to obtain information about samples submitted to FSIS laboratories for analysis and what to do with the information.

II.   [RESERVED]

III.   [RESERVED]

IV.   REFERENCES

9 CFR Chapter III

V.   TERMINOLOGY

A. What terms are used in this directive?

1. Intranet – An internal web site accessible only by the organization's employees or others with authorization. The **internet** can be used by anyone; an **intranet** can be used only by those who have permission to use it.

2. Potential positive – When the initial screen test is positive during the analysis for *E. coli* O157:H7. Further testing is required to confirm the presence or absence of *E. coli* O157:H7.

3. Presumptive positive – When the initial analytical steps of a microbiological analysis indicate the strong possibility that the organism or toxin in question is present. Additional analytical steps are needed to confirm the presence or absence of the organism or toxin.

DISTRIBUTION: Inspection Offices; T/A Inspectors;   **OPI**: OPPDE
Plant Mgt; T/A Plant Mgt; TRA; ABB; PRD; Import
Offices;Field Service Laboratories

4. Positive, not violative – In residue testing, when the analyte is present, but at or below the tolerance level set by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

5. Violative – In residue testing, when the analyte is present, above the tolerance level set by the FDA or EPA.

6. Acceptable – When the results of all analyses performed on a sample are negative or satisfactory.

7. Not Acceptable - When the results of one or more analyses performed on a sample are positive or not satisfactory.

8. Set Pass – When the *Salmonella* sample set has less than or equal to the maximum number of positives allowed to achieve the performance standard.

9. Set Fail - When the *Salmonella* sample set has more than the maximum number of positives allowed to achieve the performance standard.

10. Indeterminate – Sample results cannot be determined from available data.

11. Non-regulatory – Analysis results are for information only; no regulatory action will be taken based on these results.

VI.   BACKGROUND

What is LEARN?

LEARN is a computer application that transmits laboratory results such as microbiological, food chemistry, and residue analyses performed at FSIS laboratories. This system will have the capability to make laboratory sample information available to FSIS program personnel, establishments, and State officials. LEARN will replace the multiple applications currently reporting results through the HPDesk system.

VII.   SAMPLE INFORMATION

A. Who will have access to the sample information?

All FSIS personnel with a FSIS Exchange server login will have access to the LEARN intranet page. Within this page, a user may be limited to what sample information he or she may access, such as to information only within a circuit or district.

B. For which types of samples will there be information available on LEARN?

LEARN will provide sample information about pathogens, species identification, food chemistry, and residue testing. The information will cover domestic, import, and State samples.

C. For which types of samples will there be no information available on LEARN?

Enforcement or investigative sample information will not be available at this time. Additional types of information may be added as dictated by the specific program areas.

D. What type of sample information will be transmitted via LEARN?

1.   Notification that a sample has been received at an FSIS laboratory, and that the sample is either analyzable or has been discarded.

2.   Notification that a sample result will be delayed and an expected completion date.

3. Potential positive or presumptive positive results (for microbial pathogens).

4. Final results.

5. Other sample information may be added as enhancements to LEARN. This information will be defined on help screens available on the LEARN intranet page.

E. How soon will the sample information be available via LEARN?

1. The LEARN application will periodically check the laboratory databases for new sample information to be uploaded on the LEARN Intranet page. Sample information is entered into the FSIS laboratories' databases throughout each day. Users should take into consideration the location of the laboratory to which a sample has been sent. For example, the Western Lab will be posting data about 3 hours later than the Eastern Lab.

2. Once a sample has been shipped to an FSIS laboratory for analysis, the IIC should check LEARN the following afternoon for sample receipt confirmation, and at least once daily until final results are posted. Timely retrieval of, and action on, sample information is important.

F. How long will the sample information be available on LEARN?

Sample information will be posted on the LEARN Intranet page for at least two weeks.

G. How will final results be reported?

1.   Pathogens (ready-to-eat (RTE) meat and poultry product samples, raw beef product samples for *E. coli* O157:H7, pasteurized egg product samples) - Acceptable or Not Acceptable

2. *Salmonella* PR/HACCP compliance completed sets – Set Pass or Set Fail

3. Species Identification - Acceptable or Not Acceptable

4. Food Chemistry - Acceptable or Not Acceptable

5. Residue - Not Detected, Positive, Not Violative and Violative

6. Any reported sample – Indeterminate or Non-regulatory

NOTE: For samples submitted for multiple analyses, any positive or otherwise violative analysis result will be reported as soon as determined. Otherwise, if all analyses are negative or non-violative the results will be reported when all analyses are completed.

VIII.   LEARN APPLICATION

A. How will FSIS personnel access the LEARN application?

1. Employees must first log on to the USDAFSIS domain through the initial log-on screen when their computer is first turned on. Only after a valid user ID and password have been supplied will an employee be able to access the FSIS Intranet. For employees accessing the USDAFSIS domain via a modem, the normal connection procedures required to access the Agency's e-mail system are sufficient to gain access to the FSIS Intranet.

2. To access sample information, open the Microsoft Internet Explorer browser and go to the intranet address that will be provided by FSIS's Automated Information Systems Division. This address may then be added to the "Favorites" pull-down menu for easy future access.

3.   Employees should close the Microsoft Internet Explorer browser when finished accessing LEARN for security reasons.

B. What will the user see upon entering the LEARN application?

1. Inspection program personnel and circuit supervisors will see a screen with two large blocks: "Find a single establishment," or "List all establishments in a circuit."

2. If the user is looking for information for a specific establishment, he or she will select the "Find a single establishment" block and then enter the establishment number. Sample information for that establishment will be listed in order of date posted. The user will then click on the desired sample to link to a detailed report of the information for that sample.

3. The second block on the opening screen, "List all establishments in a circuit," is tailored for circuit supervisors and patrol inspectors who would like to see the results of various establishments at a time without having to enter the establishment number for each establishment in his or her circuit or patrol one by one on the single establishment block. This option provides sample information for all the establishments in the selected circuit. It also offers filters for the user to narrow the list to a type of establishment (meat, poultry, egg products, import, or all), and a particular type of result (e.g. residues, ready-to-eat micro, food chemistry). As in the single establishment option, the user may see a detailed report of a specific sample available by clicking that sample

4.   District, Technical Service Center, and headquarters users will see a different initial screen that is designed for their needs. This screen offers the user the option to view the results of a single establishment only, the results for all establishments in a given circuit or district, or all establishments in the country. If the "Individual Establishment Results" option is selected, a second screen is displayed for the user to specify the establishment number. If the circuit, district, or management option is selected, the second screen obtained allows the user to narrow the list of results obtained to a particular type of establishment, type of result, and when the results were posted. Once the list of individual samples meeting the selection criteria are displayed, the user can see a detailed report of a specific sample by clicking on that sample's type.

IX. POLICY

A. What do inspection program personnel do with the information/results?

1. Inspection program personnel should immediately provide the information to the establishment management and take any necessary action according to the appropriate regulations and directives.

2. For negative residue results, inspection program personnel should notify the establishment management and release the carcass or product, when applicable. For positive but not violative and violative residue results, inspection program personnel may notify the establishment management but are not to take any enforcement action until directed by the Technical Service Center.

3. The LEARN application will automatically e-mail sample information to the establishment, if the establishment has provided FSIS with an e-mail address on FSIS Form 10,230-2. However, inspection program personnel will provide establishment management with the sample information as well.

NOTE: Sample information may only be provided to the establishment from which the sample was collected.

B. What do compliance officers do with the information/results?

Compliance Officers will have access to Federal establishment laboratory sample information and will be responsible for raw ground beef sample information submitted under the retail ground beef sampling program for *E. coli* O157:H7. Instructions for accessing these results will be issued separately. Compliance officers should notify the retail establishment from which the sample was collected. Retail stores do not currently have the option to receive their results via electronic mail.

C. What if there are problems accessing the intranet page?

Program personnel expecting sample information, and having problems accessing the intranet page, should contact either their circuit supervisor (CS) or district office (DO). The CS or DO may be able to access the page and provide the sample information needed.

D. Can establishments access their own sample information?

Establishments may not access this intranet page. However, an establishment may have their sample information e-mailed to them by completing FSIS Form 10,230-2 (available from the district office) and faxing it to Office of Public Health and Science. The sample information will be e-mailed to the establishment at the same time it is posted to the intranet page.

E. How will State-inspected establishments receive their results from FSIS laboratories?

State-inspected establishments, for which FSIS laboratories analyze samples, do not currently have the option to receive their results via electronic mail. Therefore, each State has identified a State official to whom sample information may be e-mailed so that the sample information can be provided to the State-inspected establishment.

X. GUIDANCE

Contact the Technical Service Center for further information and guidance regarding the LEARN application.

/s/
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  and Evaluation