



Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

Central Valley Meat Suspended for Humane Handling Violations

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

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USDA announced this week that it continues to take aggressive action to investigate and respond to disturbing evidence of inhumane treatment of cattle at Central Valley Meat in Hanford, Calif. FSIS notified Central Valley Meat that the agency was immediately suspending the assignment of inspectors at the establishment on Aug. 19, effectively halting slaughter operations at the establishment.

Within hours of being provided a video taken by an animal welfare organization, the department initiated an investigation. FSIS dispatched several teams of investigators to California to continue gathering information on the ground.

In terms of humane handling, FSIS found violations and suspended the mark of inspection. The teams will continue to examine the violations which have been documented in the video.

In terms of food safety, the video footage provided to USDA does not show a “downer” animal entering the food supply. However, the department is conducting a thorough investigation that encompasses food safety and will respond appropriately to its results.

“Our top priority is to ensure the safety of the food Americans feed their families,” said FSIS Administrator Al Almanza. “We have reviewed the video and determined that, while some of the footage provided shows unacceptable treatment of cattle, it does not show anything that would compromise food safety. Therefore, we have not substantiated a food safety violation at this time. We are aggressively continuing to investigate the allegations.”

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Export Requirement Updates



The Library of Export Requirements has been updated to reflect changes in export requirements for the following countries:

Colombia

European Union

People's Republic of China

Complete information can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp.

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...*Plant Suspended*

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USDA food safety regulations state that if an animal is non-ambulatory disabled at any time prior to slaughter, it must be condemned promptly, humanely euthanized and properly discarded so that it does not enter the food supply.

FSIS is responsible for ensuring that meat, poultry and processed egg products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled and also works to ensure industry's compliance with good commercial practices and with the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act, which requires that livestock be handled and slaughtered in a humane way.

Updates on FSIS Testing for *E. coli*

FSIS posts bi-weekly updates for the agency's raw ground beef *E. coli* sampling program. Included are testing results of raw ground beef component samples for *E. coli* O157:H7 and STECs from FSIS routine and follow-up sampling programs. Also featured is data for non-O157 STECs by each non-O157 STEC serogroup.

To review testing results, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Ground_Beef_E.Coli_Testing_Results/index.asp.

FSIS Policy Update

FSIS issues notices and directives to protect public health. All notices and directives are available at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/index.asp. The following policy update was recently issued:

Notice 50-12, Inspection Responsibilities and Authorities for Reducing Slaughter or Evisceration Line Speed

Get Answers at *AskFSIS*

AskFSIS is a web-based technology and policy question-and-answer forum on topics such as exporting, labeling, inspection, programs and procedures. In addition, *AskFSIS* offers Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds that link back to the Q&As. Visit <http://askfsis.custhelp.com/> to view recently posted topics. The following topics were recently updated:

District Office Contact Information

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1805