



# Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

## Update on Industry Access to PHIS

FSIS Administrator Al Almanza announced on Tuesday that industry access to PHIS would be postponed as a result of the agency’s current budget situation. “The move,” he said, “would not affect agency implementation of PHIS.”

“We did not make this decision lightly,” Almanza said. “We knew that we had all of the funding in place to fully implement PHIS within the agency, but we would not have been able to support real-time questions that the industry may have had. Rather than providing access without proper support, we decided to postpone this part of PHIS until we have the funding in place. This is disappointing, but it is the right thing to do.”

Under the original plan, establishments would have been immediately given an “invitational key” to interact electronically with FSIS and perform a wide variety of tasks, including submitting export applications and other information, scheduling incoming shipments, reading reports and responding to and appealing noncompliance records. Until establishments have access to PHIS, they will continue to receive information and updates from inspection personnel.

PHIS is expected to be launched the second week in April, and will be implemented in sequential stages. For more information about PHIS, visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/phis/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/phis/).

## FSIS Restructures CID Regions

The Office of Program Evaluation, Enforcement and Review will complete a realignment of its Compliance and Investigation Divisions (CID) from five to four regions, effective April 24.

This internal reorganization is intended to streamline reporting processes and will have no impact on industry or other FSIS stakeholders. To review the new regions, visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/Contact\\_Us/Office\\_Locations\\_&Phone\\_Numbers/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Contact_Us/Office_Locations_&Phone_Numbers/index.asp).

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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:

**Brazil**  
**Canada**  
**Cuba**  
**Japan**  
**Russia**

Complete information can be found at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/Export\\_Information/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp).

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## Inspection Seminars Designed for International Government Officials

FSIS will host a meat and poultry inspection seminar for international officials in Mayaguez, PR, from May 16 through June 11.

This seminar will be held in cooperation with the University of Puerto Rico and includes basic HACCP certification. There will also be an in-depth review of FSIS verification of HACCP and sanitation requirements.

Other topics and activities include import and export policies and procedures, foreign inspection program equivalence, and field visits. This seminar will be conducted in Spanish.

For more information, visit [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/2011\\_Meat\\_&\\_Poultry\\_Inspection\\_Seminars/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/2011_Meat_&_Poultry_Inspection_Seminars/index.asp).

## NACMCF Subcommittee to Hold Public Meeting

A subcommittee of the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) will hold public meetings from April 5-7.

NACMCF's subcommittee on the Study of Microbiological Criteria as Indicators of Process Control or Insanitary Conditions is meeting to develop guidance to assist the Department of Defense (DoD). DoD will use this guidance in developing refined microbiological and other criteria to better evaluate process control and insanitary conditions at the point of production.

The meetings will take place on Tuesday, April 5, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Wednesday, April 6, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; and Thursday, April 7, from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the Aerospace Building, 901 D St., SW, Room 369, Washington, DC.

To participate, contact Karen Thomas-Sharp at (202) 690-6620 or [karen.thomas-sharp@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:karen.thomas-sharp@fsis.usda.gov). Due to increased security measures, all persons wishing to attend must RSVP in advance.

## New *Salmonella* Standards: A Weekly Industry Progress Update

Product Class	Percent Completed and Passed as of 3/21/11	Percent That Could Complete and Pass by 3/31/11
Young Chickens	87.3 (0.0)	87.4 (0.0)
Young Turkeys	93.9 (3.0)	93.9 (0.0)

FSIS is tracking industry performance to see if 90 percent of poultry slaughter establishments would have met updated and tightened *Salmonella* standards for 2010 if they had been in effect. (See the Dec. 17, 2010, issue of the *Constituent Update* at [www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Const\\_Update\\_121710/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Const_Update_121710/index.asp).)

The table above shows progress as of this week, projecting a final best-case possible total with changes from last week indicated in the parentheses.

### Updates on FSIS Testing for *E. coli*

Weekly updates for the agency's raw beef *E. coli* sampling program are posted to the FSIS website. For comparative previous and current year results, go to [www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Ground\\_Beef\\_E.coli\\_Testing\\_Results/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Ground_Beef_E.coli_Testing_Results/index.asp).

## USDA Announces Codex Public Meeting on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

The Office of Food Safety and the Agricultural Marketing Service will co-sponsor a public meeting to receive public comments and draft U.S. positions that will be discussed during the 16th Session of the Codex Committee on Fresh Fruits and Vegetables to be held in Mexico.

The meeting is scheduled for April 5, from 10:30 a.m. to noon in Room 2068 of USDA's South Building, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC. To participate via teleconference, call (866) 692-3158 and enter the pass code 5986642.

Agenda items and related documents will be accessible on the Codex website at [www.codexalimentarius.net/current.asp](http://www.codexalimentarius.net/current.asp). To submit written comments or request copies of documents, contact Kenneth Lowery at (202) 690-7760 or [kenneth.lowery@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:kenneth.lowery@fsis.usda.gov).

### 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/>. Recently posted topics include:

- **Official Premises**  
[http://askfsis.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/askfsis.cfg/php/enduser/std\\_adp.php?p\\_faqid=1509](http://askfsis.custhelp.com/cgi-bin/askfsis.cfg/php/enduser/std_adp.php?p_faqid=1509)
- **Signing Export Documentation**  
[http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/170](http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/170)

### FSIS Policy Update

FSIS issues notices and directives to protect public health. The following policy update was recently issued:

- **Notice 13-11, *Level of In-Plant Targeted Testing for Chemical Residues***

All notices and directives are available at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/index.asp).