



# Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

## Declare Independence from Foodborne Illness this Fourth of July

When celebrating our nation’s independence this Fourth of July, FSIS reminds Americans that proper food handling practices can prevent their “Life, Liberty and pursuit of Happiness” from being threatened by foodborne illness.

The warm temperatures that draw crowds of people to outdoor celebrations also encourage the growth of bacteria, and incidents of food-related illnesses rise in summer months. But four simple steps—Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill—can help families declare freedom from foodborne illness at Independence Day celebrations.

In time for the holiday, FSIS has created a new infographic in partnership with the CDC, FDA and the Ad Council featuring food safety tips from the Founding Fathers. The infographic, fact sheets, videos and podcasts about safe food handling and preparation in warmer months can be found on FSIS’ “Grill It Safe” webpage at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Food\\_Safety\\_Education/Grill\\_It\\_Safe](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Food_Safety_Education/Grill_It_Safe).

This seasonal food safety outreach is part of a multi-faceted USDA initiative to prevent foodborne illness. It is the first joint public service campaign to empower families to further reduce their risk of foodborne illness at home by checking their key food safety steps: clean, separate, cook and chill. For more information, go to [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov).

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

Results of laboratory testing for raw ground beef and raw ground beef components for the week of June 25 are unavailable on the FSIS website to allow for system updates. Had the information been updated on the FSIS website, it would have shown one positive from raw ground beef and one positive from imported raw ground beef components. Information from previous samples may still be found at [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).

### Inside this Issue

Mobile Ask Karen in Spanish .....	2
USDA Offers Food Safety Tips This Hurricane Season .....	3

## Export Requirement Updates



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

**Brazil  
Mexico  
Singapore**

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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## Spanish-Language Virtual Expert Answers Food Safety Questions on Your Smartphone

A new Spanish-language food safety app is available to consumers around the clock on their mobile devices. “Mobile Pregúntele a Karen” is the Spanish-language version of Mobile Ask Karen, the virtual expert who answers smartphone users’ questions about properly handling, storing and preparing food to prevent illness. The English version of Mobile Ask Karen was launched in May 2011.

“Expanding our food safety information to multiple languages means we are reaching a wider audience and preventing more foodborne illness,” said USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Elisabeth Hagen. “As consumers become familiar with these user-friendly mobile applications, they will develop good food safety habits and have instant access to reliable food safety information.”

The Pregúntele a Karen website has been available from desktop browsers since September 2010. However, FSIS recognized that consumers often need answers to questions like, “To what temperature should I cook steak?” or, “How can I keep food safe outdoors?” when they are not able to access a computer. The new mobile format now allows people to take the food safety information “Karen” provides in Spanish with them to the barbecue grill, farmers market, grocery store and kitchen.

Both Mobile Pregúntele a Karen, which is optimized for iOS and Android devices, and the desktop-based Pregúntele a Karen are available 24 hours a day at [m.PregunteleaKaren.gov](http://m.PregunteleaKaren.gov) or [www.PregunteleaKaren.gov](http://www.PregunteleaKaren.gov). Consumers can also email, chat with a live representative, or call USDA’s Meat and Poultry Hotline directly from the app. To use these features on the app, simply choose “Contact Us” from the menu. The live chat option and the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline, 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854), are available in Spanish and English from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET Monday through Friday.

## FSIS Policy Updates

FSIS issues notices and directives to protect public health. All notices and directives are available at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/index.asp). The following policy updates were recently issued:

**Notice 43-12**, *Using the Kidney Inhibition Swab (KISTM) Test to Detect Antimicrobial Drug Residues in All Livestock in Slaughter Establishments - Phase IV*

**Notice 44-12**, *Level of In-Plant Targeted Testing for Chemical Residues*

## USDA Offers Food Safety Tips in Advance of This Season's Hurricanes

FSIS is urging residents of coastal states to plan ahead this hurricane season and minimize the potential for foodborne illness in the event of power outages, flooding and other problems that could be associated with weather emergencies.

“As you prepare your home for hurricane season, remember to protect food from being exposed to contaminated water or unsafe storage temperatures in a power outage,” USDA Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Elisabeth Hagen said. “When it comes to emergencies of any kind, planning ahead is always the best strategy to help reduce the risk of foodborne illness.”

FSIS encourages those living in coastal areas to be prepared, particularly when it comes to ensuring access to safe food and water after weather emergencies. Families should have an emergency plan in place that includes food and water safety precautions.

The publication “A Consumer’s Guide to Food Safety: Severe Storms and Hurricanes” is available at [www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Severe\\_Storms\\_and\\_Hurricanes\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Severe_Storms_and_Hurricanes_Guide.pdf) to print and keep for reference during a power outage.