



Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

Results for FSIS Verification for *Campylobacter*

FSIS posted this week on its website HACCP Verification *Campylobacter* Results. The results are from July through December 2011.

Since July 1, 2011, FSIS has implemented new *Campylobacter* performance standards for whole carcasses of young chickens (broilers) and young turkeys, in conjunction with new lower standards for *Salmonella* in those same market classes. Overall, the young chicken industry is meeting the acceptable percent positive rate reflected in the new standard at 9.43 percent (10.4 percent acceptable), while the young turkey industry is well above, adversely, the standard at 4.22 percent (.79 percent acceptable).

Findings today show that for *Campylobacter*, the performance standards and sample set criteria for tracking and reporting to establishments is applied to results from the smaller of the two laboratory *Campylobacter* sample portions (1 mL), which detects higher levels of contamination. The *Campylobacter* performance standard (www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/HACCP_Verification_Campylobacter_Results_2011/index.asp#Table1) is 10.4 percent for young chickens (or ≤ 8 positive samples out of a 51 sample set) and .79 percent for young turkeys (or ≤ 3 positive samples out of a 56 sample set).

FSIS has performed an initial analysis of the *Campylobacter* results (www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/HACCP_Verification_Campylobacter_Results_2011/index.asp#Table2) by market class

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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

Volume 14, Issue 6
February 10, 2012



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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:

Egypt

Japan

United Arab Emirates

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

FSIS Constituent Update is prepared by the Congressional and Public Affairs Office.

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(product) and HACCP establishment size (large, small or very small). The analysis was based on the first six months of available verification testing data (July through December, 2011).

In addition, the agency has looked at a comparison of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* verification set results, according to whether the set passed or failed for each pathogen (www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/HACCP_Verification_Campylobacter_Results_2011/index.asp#Table3). Available information is very limited at this time, with only 42 young chicken and 15 young turkey sets completed. While it is still too early to draw long-term conclusions, it is interesting to note that to date the vast majority of *Campylobacter* set failures occurred in sets that passed the *Salmonella* performance standard.

**Note: There are a number of establishments that do not have the HACCP size accurately reflected in the old FSIS database. This is rapidly being corrected with the full implementation of the agency's new Public Health Information System (PHIS).*

FSIS Completes Review of Some Industry Methods to Detect Non-O157 STEC

The agency has completed its review of the first of several non-O157 Shiga-toxin producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) methods developed by industry that were submitted to FSIS for review.

FSIS recognizes the challenges in conducting robust validation studies for non-STEC detection methodologies. Therefore the agency is providing letters of no objection to companies that provide sufficient validation data for their non-O157 STEC detection methods.

These no objection letters will enable the industry to use their methods to detect and isolate non-O157 STEC in raw ground beef and beef trim. Companies that wish to obtain a letter of no object for their non-O157 STEC detection method should submit their request through *AskFSIS* (<http://askfsis.custhelp.com>). The request should include: a detailed method protocol; specificity and sensitivity of the method; the validation study design; and the validation study data.

The validation study and data should conform to standards from the FSIS Guidance for Evaluating Test Kit Performance which can be found at www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Validation_Studies_Pathogen_Detection_Methods.pdf.

Register for Codex Public Meeting on Pesticide Residues

In collaboration with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), FSIS is sponsoring a public meeting to draft agenda items and receive public comments to be discussed at the 44th session of the Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues (CCPR) in Shanghai, P.R. China.

The public meeting will be held on Feb. 14, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the EPA in room S-7100, One Potomac Yard South, 2777 South Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, 22202.

Documents and agenda items related to the 44th Session of the CCPR will be accessible at www.codexalimentarius.org. For more information about the public meeting, contact Doreen Chen-Moulec at (202) 205-7760 or doreen.chen-moulec@fsis.usda.gov.

To submit written comments, contact Lois Rossi at the Office of Pesticide Programs, EPA, Ariel Rios Bldg, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. Individuals may also contact her at (703) 305-5447 or rossi.lois@epamail.epa.gov.

FSIS to Extend Implementation Date on Routine Sampling Program for Non-O157:H7

Date extended from March 5 to June 4, 2012

This week, FSIS is announcing that it was extending for 90 days the implementation date for routine sampling of six additional STEC serogroups (O26, O45, O103, O111, O121 and O145); the implementation date will begin June 4.

The purpose of the extension is to provide additional time for establishments to validate their test methods and detect these pathogens prior to entering the stream of commerce.

FSIS will initially sample raw beef manufacturing trimmings produced domestically and imported, and test the samples for the serogroups.

On Sep. 13, 2011, USDA announced that if the serogroups are found in raw ground beef or its precursors, those products will be prohibited from entering commerce. This policy represents a major advancement for public health.

An advance copy of an updated *Federal Register* notice will be posted on the FSIS website as soon as it becomes available.

Editor's Note: The Constituent Update Special Edition, Feb. 8, 2012, inadvertently stated that FSIS would also initially sample other raw ground beef product components, in addition to raw beef manufacturing trimmings.

Pasteurized Egg Products: New Resource Available Online

FSIS posted on its website a list of member laboratories that are in the Pasteurized Egg Product Recognized Laboratory (PEPRLab) Program.

PEPRLab is a program for laboratories performing *Salmonella* analysis on official surveillance samples of pasteurized egg products.

Program procedures and the member laboratory list are available at www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/PEPRLab_program/index.asp. The laboratory list will be updated bi-annually and subscription to an automated notification is available online.

Implementation Delayed for Nutrition Labeling Rule

FSIS is delaying the effective date of the final rule that will require nutrition labeling of the major cuts of single-ingredient, raw meat and poultry products and ground or chopped meat and poultry products. The original effective date of the final rule was Jan. 1, but is now delayed until March 1.

The new effective date will ensure that industry has adequate time to comply with the requirements of the final rule.

The *Federal Register* notice announcing the delay was published on the FSIS website at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Interim_&_Final_Rules/index.asp.

Register for the 2012 Agricultural Outlook Forum

USDA is hosting the 2012 Agricultural Outlook Forum, *Moving Agriculture Forward: USDA – Growing, Innovating and Celebrating 150 Years*, Feb. 23-24, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel in Arlington, Va.

To learn more and register for the Forum, visit www.usda.gov/oce/forum.

FSIS Posts a Comparison of *Salmonella* Serotype Incidence

The agency is featuring on its website a paper presenting data on *Salmonella* serotype incidence in FSIS-regulated products and salmonellosis cases from CDC's FoodNet and outbreak databases (www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Serotype_Incidence_and_Salmonellosis.pdf). This document serves to present data that support that chicken products are an important vehicle for human *Salmonella* infections in the United States.

In May 2010, FSIS published a *Federal Register* notice (www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/2009-0034.pdf) on the revised performance standard for *Salmonella* species on young chicken (broiler) carcasses. Public comments asserted that FSIS did not present evidence that reductions of *Salmonella* incidence on young chicken carcasses would offer public health benefits. On March 2011, the agency published a *Federal Register* notice (www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FRPubs/2010-0029.pdf) that presented CDC outbreak data and case-control studies as evidence for such a relationship.

This analysis was developed to continue the discussion by presenting additional evidence from:

- 1) CDC outbreaks of chicken products,
- 2) CDC serotype-specific salmonellosis rates, and
- 3) FSIS *Salmonella* serotype incidences in young chickens.

In conjunction with these analyses and data recently presented in the 2011 FSIS *Federal Register* notice, the agency provides further evidence of the connection between *Salmonella* incidence in young chickens and salmonellosis.

For more information about the paper or to offer feedback, contact David Goldman at (202) 720-2644.

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.

Transcript and Notes from the Pre-harvest Public Meeting Now Available

FSIS has made available notes from round table discussions during the Nov. 9, 2011 Pre-harvest Food Safety public meeting held in Riverdale, MD.

Through this meeting, USDA agencies requested public input on pre-harvest pathogen control strategies designed to reduce the likelihood that beef will be contaminated with pathogens of public health concern, such as Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC) and *Salmonella* during the slaughter process.

The official transcript and flip chart notes are available at www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Pre-Harvest_FS_Notes.pdf. The meeting agenda and presentation slides were posted to the FSIS website in November 2011 and are still available at www.fsis.usda.gov/news/Agenda_Preharvest_110911/index.asp.

A response will be provided at a future date to comments received during the meeting and those received during the official comment period that ended Jan. 3, 2012.

USDA Signs MOU with FDA

USDA signed a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with FDA, effective Jan. 19. It was developed to serve as an umbrella agreement to enhance informational exchange related to food safety and public health activities beyond existing agreements.

While FSIS served as the lead to develop and negotiate this agreement, the MOU includes other USDA agencies like the Agricultural Marketing Service, Agricultural Research Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Farm Service Agency, Food and Nutrition Service, Foreign Agricultural Service, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration, and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

Under the agreement, agencies agree to:

- Cooperate with each other in the exchange of records, data and other non-public information related to food safety and public health issues.
- Establish and follow similar, standardized and simplified information sharing procedures to speed the receipt, review and response to information sharing requests.
- Receive, review and respond to requests for information in a timely manner.

The MOU contains provisions to safeguard against unauthorized use and disclosure of non-public information. These provisions include:

- Protect trade secrets and other restricted or confidential information, and information that are precluded from being shared under law or regulation.
- Meet information disclosure provisions of Section 1619 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, which is applicable to the USDA Secretary and its agencies.
- Cooperate in referring FOIA requests to the appropriate, responsible agency.

While the new MOU does not nullify any existing agreements between agencies, it does amend and supersede certain provisions set out in other agreements between USDA agencies and FDA.

To review this in detail, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/USDA_FDA_Info_Sharing_MOU.pdf.

Keeping Families Food Safe

To help families prevent foodborne illnesses, the *Food Safe Families* campaign developed videos for the four critical food safety behaviors—Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill—soon to be shown in WalMart stores.

The *Food Safe Families* campaign is a joint national multimedia public service campaign by FSIS and the Ad Council, in partnership with FDA and CDC.

Also, the *Food Safe Families* toolkit, with icons, activity materials and guidance, is now available on the Ad Council's *Food Safe Families* website for free downloading to educators and organizations performing food safety outreach. Check out the toolkit at <http://foodsafety.adcouncil.org/>.

Comment Period on Proposed Rule for Labeling Extended

FSIS proposed a rule on Dec. 5, 2011, that will allow establishments to label a broader range of products without first submitting the label to the agency for approval. The comment period, originally scheduled to close last week, Feb. 3, 2012, will now close on March 3, 2012.

The extension was granted to allow sufficient time for industry members to: (1) develop comments comprehensively addressing important proposed changes to the prior label approval system; and (2) assemble, analyze and submit data establishments have collected on their experience with the prior label approval system and generic labeling.

Individuals are invited to submit comments electronically through the Federal *eRulemaking* Portal at www.regulations.gov. Comments may also be mailed to USDA, FSIS, OPPD, RIMD, Docket Clearance Unit, Patriots Plaza III, 355 E St., S.W., Rm. 8-164, Washington, D.C. 20024-3221. All items submitted must include the docket number FSIS-2005-0016.

Webinar on Current Generic Labeling System

A webinar on FSIS' generic labeling system will be held on Feb. 14 at 2 p.m. ET. To access the webinar, go to <https://connect16.uc.att.com/usda/meet/?ExEventID=85277207> and follow the on-screen instructions. For questions, contact Kristin Goodwin at (301) 504-0878 or kristin.goodwin@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. To view recently posted topics, visit <http://askfsis.custhelp.com/>.

FSIS Notice 04-12 and Product Destined for Further Processing Using High Pressure Pasteurization or Irradiation

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1724

PHIS Producer Information for Carcass-Based *Salmonella* or *Campylobacter* Verification Testing

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1750