



Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

Advisory Subcommittee to Discuss Study on Microbiological Criteria

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods, or NACMCF, Subcommittee on Study of Microbiological Criteria as Indicators of Process Control or Insanitary Conditions is currently hosting a series of public meetings, which started Feb. 7.

During these meetings, the subcommittee is developing recommendations for the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) related to ground beef purchase for the Federal Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs. Specifically, the subcommittee will address questions on microbiological criteria, pathogen testing methodology and sampling plans to support ground beef purchase for the School Lunch Program. There are two more meetings available for registration:

- **Feb. 23**
Teleconference, noon to 3 p.m. (ET)
- **March 28**
Teleconference, subcommittee report to be presented for adoption at committee plenary meeting, 2 to 5 p.m. (ET)

To register please contact Karen Thomas-Sharp at (202) 690-6620 or karen.thomas-sharp@fsis.usda.gov or Jude Smedra at (202) 690-6607 or jude.smedra@fsis.usda.gov.

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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:

Kuwait

New Zealand

Saudi Arabia

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.

Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Education

Assistant Administrator
Carol Blake

Executive Staff
Brian Mabry, Acting CPA Director
Greg DiNapoli, Deputy Director

Editor
Ndidi A. Mojay

Assistant Editor
Alexandra Tarrant

Editor-at-Large
Joan Lindenberger

Come to Know the *Faces of Food Safety*

FSIS recently launched *Faces of Food Safety*, an initiative that shares the stories of its dedicated workforce – inspectors, veterinarians, investigators, administrative assistants and scientists.

Jeremy “Todd” Reed is this month’s Face of Food Safety. Reed serves as the Chief of the Analytical Design Branch, Data Analysis and Integration Group of the agency’s Office of Data Integration and Food Protection, also known as ODIFP.

Reed holds degrees in Chinese and International Relations; has advanced credentials in mathematics and is an author of a book on China’s Islamic Militants and the Global Terrorist Threat.

To read more about Reed’s story, visit www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSIS/Faces_Food_Safety/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.

The forum features 30 breakout sessions, spotlighting a range of issues related to global food security, locally grown foods, fighting foodborne illnesses, sustainability and the farm income outlook for 2012.

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

FSIS Policy Update

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

Notice 13-12, Sample Collection from Cattle Under the Bovine Ongoing Surveillance Program

All notices and directives are available at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/index.asp.

Contacting the Labeling and Program Delivery Division

Access to the Labeling and Program Delivery Division (LPPD) in Washington, D.C. may be affected due to building modifications on the 8th and 9th floors of the Patriot's Plaza.

This project has been delayed and will limit normal access for label pickup and delivery. If needed, LPPD staff will be available during normal times of operation which is from 8 am to 4 p.m.

FSIS understands that timely label approvals affect every establishment, not just label consultants but even foreign countries and therefore apologizes for the inconvenience.

Until further notice, standard pickup and delivery times are from 10 to 11:30 a.m. and from 1:30 to 3 p.m. (with the exception of Wednesdays when there are no morning times scheduled). Questions or concerns can be directed to the Office of the Director, LPDD, at (301) 504-0878.

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.

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.

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.