

# Small Plant NEWS

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## Small Plant NEWS

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## Labeling for Child Nutrition Programs

By Linda B. Singletary

**D**id you know there is a special U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) labeling program for foods that are marketed to school lunch programs? The Child Nutrition Labeling Program is a voluntary program run by the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) in cooperation with the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. FNS works directly with commercial food processing firms, such as yours, so your products can be labeled for child nutrition program needs.

Having a Child Nutrition (CN) label on your product offers greater potential for marketing to Child Nutrition Programs. The label statement provides assurance of accurate nutrition claims and clearly identifies the nutritional contribution of a product toward the FNS meal pattern requirements.

Upon application, FNS evaluates your product's formulation to determine its nutritional contribution to school meals. You then may state this contribution on your label. The program also provides a warranty to CN programs that purchase Child Nutrition-labeled products.

Main dish products that contribute to the meat component of school meals are eligible. A few examples of meat and poultry products that are eligible include beef patties, meat pizzas, meat and bean burritos, egg rolls and chicken nuggets.

To carry a Child Nutrition label, your product must be inspected by FSIS or your State inspection program.

In addition, your product's nutritional contribution must be determined using yields set forth in the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*. This publication is available online at FNS' Web site at [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov). To locate the guide from the home page, use the left navigation area, type in "Food Buying Guide" in the search area and click on "go." You may also receive further assistance by calling (703) 305-2609.

Processors frequently ask if a Child Nutrition-labeled product costs more. Tim Vazquez of the Food and Nutrition Service explains that, "a Child Nutrition-labeled product may well cost a little more than similar non-Child Nutrition-labeled products because of special labeling requirements, inspection costs, and additional quality controls. But many food firms find it to be cost effective."

A Child Nutrition label is easily identified by a distinct border that includes the Child Nutrition logo, enclosing the meal pattern contribution statement, a six-digit product identification number, the USDA/FNS authorization statement and the month and year of approval.

Child Nutrition-labeled products are required under FNS' regulations to be produced under a partial quality control program to monitor formulation control, raw and cooked weights and other aspects of the formulation that affect the crediting of the product. Guidance for preparing quality control programs that meet FNS requirements can be located online at [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/CNlabeling](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/CNlabeling). Or, for further assistance, call the Food and Nutrition Service at (703) 305-2609.

# Food Safety Resources

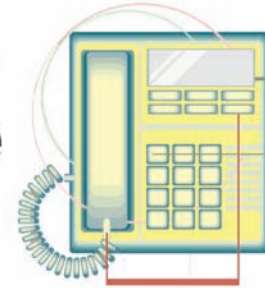
By Mary Gioglio

The *Process Validation Workshop* material, which consists of three video tapes and a workbook, is another frequently requested item from FSIS' Food Safety Resources for Small and Very Small Plants brochure. This material covers topics ranging from meat microbiology basics to controlling *Listeria monocytogenes*. The workbook is also available in Spanish.

To request this item or any other food safety resource, fax the order form found on the PDF version of the Food Safety Resource Brochure at [www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/HACCP\\_Resources\\_Brochure.pdf](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/HACCP_Resources_Brochure.pdf) to (202) 690-6519, or complete an online version of the form found at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/HACCP\\_Resources\\_Order\\_Form/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/HACCP_Resources_Order_Form/index.asp) and send it to [FoodSafetyResources@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:FoodSafetyResources@fsis.usda.gov).



## FSIS Makes Changes to Phone System



By Ilene Arnold and Kim Butler

FSIS has made changes to the telephone system in its Omaha, Neb., offices to improve customer service and address recent changes to the Policy Development Division, formerly known as the Technical Service Center, and other program areas located in the facility.

Through a series of menus and submenus, callers are now informed on how to reach the most suitable contact for their question. Callers are also advised to listen carefully to the new menu before choosing their option.

The Policy Development Division answers technical questions related to general domestic inspection policies and on FSIS issuances, such as directives, notices and interactive knowledge exchange scenarios.

Calls related to international inspection policies, such as export-related questions, are directed to the Office of International Affairs (OIA). OIA staff located at the Omaha facility will answer these questions and can be reached by following the appropriate telephone menu prompts.

Callers with labeling and sampling questions should be aware of the following changes:

- The Labeling and Program Delivery Division in Washington, D.C., responds to labeling questions at (202) 205-0279.
- If you have questions on sampling, you'll need to contact the Risk Management Division in Washington, D.C. at (202) 205-0032.

You can also reach these two offices when you call the Policy Development Division at (800) 233-3935. By following the menu options, you will automatically be forwarded to either the Labeling and Program Delivery Division or Risk Management Division.

The Policy Development Division staff can be contacted at (402) 344-5000 or (800) 233-3935, Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 5 p.m., central time. This office is closed on Federal holidays.

Emergency contact phone numbers for FSIS District Offices can be found on the Agency's Web site at [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov). Click the "Contact Us" tab, then the link to "Office Locations & Phone Numbers."

Callers can also find additional information and answers to commonly asked questions on FSIS' Web site. The "I Want To ..." box on the right side of the home page provides quick access to frequently requested information. It also includes resources such as "Ask a Food Safety Question" through *Ask Karen* ([AskKaren.gov](http://AskKaren.gov)) and *askFSIS* (<http://askfsis.custhelp.com>) to ask inspection-related questions.

# Education Sessions Well Received

By Karlease Kelly

**F** SIS held three Regulatory Education Sessions on the content of recently issued policies related to *E. coli* O157:H7 in St. Louis, Green Bay and Philadelphia last fall. A total of 63 participants attended the sessions. Sixty percent of the participants were from industry and States, and forty percent were FSIS inspection personnel.

Written evaluations of the sessions indicated that participants felt they were able to ask questions freely and get clarification on issues. Participant feedback also showed that the course instructors were effective. Eighty percent claimed the session met their expectations, and 90 percent indicated they would recommend the sessions to others. The questions asked at the sessions were shared with FSIS' policy division to be included in *askFSIS*.

FSIS is continuing to conduct these sessions. For more information about when and where these sessions



FSIS regional trainers lead and provide the instructions at the FSIS' Regulatory Education Sessions. These sessions are an important component of FSIS' comprehensive effort to improve outreach to small and very small plants. Having industry representatives and inspectors in the room together helps develop a common understanding and gets everyone on the same page. (Photo courtesy of FSIS' Center for Learning)

will be held, or to pre-register to attend a session, use the following Web address: [www.fsis.usda.gov/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/)

[News\\_&\\_Events/Outreach\\_Sessions\\_SVS\\_Plants/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp). Or call (800) 336-3747 for further assistance.

## Briefs *By Sheila Johnson*

### Public Meetings

The National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection meeting was held on February 5-6, 2008. The Committee meets biannually to discuss food safety issues and make recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture. Under Secretary for Food Safety Dr. Richard A. Raymond, FSIS Administrator Alfred V. Almanza, and other agency leaders worked closely with the Committee during this 2-day event. Transcripts and other meeting materials will be available on FSIS' Web site in the coming weeks. Call (202) 690-6520 for further assistance.

### Communications to Congress

FSIS generates for Congress periodic and special reports and also provides testimony before Congressional committee meetings. Visit FSIS' Web site at

[www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Communications\\_to\\_Congress/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Communications_to_Congress/index.asp) to view testimony from agency personnel. You can click on the "Communications to Congress" highlight to find testimonies from agency officials on issues ranging from the food safety budget to carbon monoxide in meat packaging. You'll also find interesting information on FSIS' small and very small plant outreach efforts. Call FSIS' Congressional and Public Affairs Office at (202) 720-9113 for further assistance in obtaining testimonies and any other documents generated for Congress.

### Feedback Requested

Suggestions, comments and feedback on *Small Plant News* are always appreciated. We want this publication to serve your needs in the best possible manner. Send your comments to [SmallPlantNews@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:SmallPlantNews@fsis.usda.gov) or call (202) 690-6520.

## Food Safety Videos Available on the Web



By Ellyn Blumberg

**H**ave you ever wished there was a free, fast, and easy way to get copies of videos on food safety? Now there is.

FSIS has launched a new Web page that features streaming food safety videos of public service announcements, regulatory information sessions, and training on meat, poultry and processed egg products inspection. By using streaming video, you do not have to wait to download large files before seeing the video. Instead, the videos are sent in a continuous stream and are played as they arrive. Access the food safety videos at [www.fsis.usda.gov/news\\_&\\_events/Food\\_Safety\\_Videos/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/news_&_events/Food_Safety_Videos/index.asp).

“Approximately 90 percent of the federally inspected meat, poultry and processed egg product plants in the United States are considered ‘small’ or ‘very small plants,’” said Karlease Kelly, Assistant Administrator for the Office of Outreach, Employee Education and Training. “This new resource helps ensure that training and access to food safety information are available in a format that’s uniform,

easily accessible and consistent. The Web page provides a wide range of subject matter, ranging from information on safe cooking temperatures, inspection procedures, to programs on compliance guidelines.”

The meat, poultry and processed egg products videos targeted to plants, employees and other food handlers cover topics such as control of *Listeria monocytogenes* in retail establishments, food safety at pow wows, the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point System, food defense, post-packaging heat treatment, new FSIS food inspector orientation and new plant orientation and new plant owner/operator orientation. Many of these videos were developed through cooperative agreements with universities and State agriculture departments. Copies of the meat, poultry and processed egg products inspection videos can also be ordered from the agency’s Food Safety Resources for Small and Very Small Plants brochure at [www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/HACCP\\_Resources\\_Brochure/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/HACCP_Resources_Brochure/index.asp).

There are also regulatory education session videos that feature programs to promote uniform understanding of the regulations. These sessions cover topics such as avian influenza, compliance guidelines for *E. coli* O157:H7 verification, in-plant risk management practices for controlling *Salmonella* in poultry and *E. coli* O157:H7 in beef slaughter, compliance guidelines for production of safe meat and poultry jerky products and raw products, and compliance guidelines for controlling *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat products.

FSIS hopes that you find this resource helpful and encourages your feedback. Call (202) 690-6520 or send an email to [SmallPlantNews@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:SmallPlantNews@fsis.usda.gov) with your feedback and suggestions.

## Commonly Asked Questions & Answers

**Q.** Do the positive results of *E. coli* O157:H7 samples that are collected and analyzed by a State public health laboratory trigger follow-up sampling the same as if FSIS collected and analyzed the sample?

**A.** Yes, according to FSIS Notice 66-07, FSIS will conduct follow-up testing on the basis of this finding the same as an FSIS result, as long as the State laboratory’s result is one that the agency would use under FSIS Directive 10,000.1 (see FSIS Notice 64-07).

**Q.** Do antimicrobial solutions need to be declared on the label?

**A.** When approved antimicrobial agents are used in meat or poultry processing for the momentary reduction of microorganisms, and are determined by FSIS to be consistent with the Food and Drug Administration’s definition of an incidental additive (21 CFR 101.100(a)(3)), they do not require labeling. The treatment of meat or poultry with an approved antimicrobial agent in water should not result in the product retaining any water. Therefore, as long as an establishment can demonstrate that no water is absorbed during, prior, or subsequent to processing steps, such as chilling, a meat or poultry product’s labeling would not need to bear a retained water statement.