



Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

Comment Period Extended for Modernization of Poultry Slaughter Inspection Proposed Rule

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

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FSIS announced yesterday that it will extend the comment period 30 days for a proposed rule to modernize the way young chickens and turkeys are inspected. The original deadline to submit comments was April 26; the new deadline to receive comments is 30 days after the notice announcing the extension publishes in the *Federal Register*. The request to extend the comment period was made by constituents and the agency agreed.

The notice clarifies answers to questions from several groups; the posting of those answers ensures that the groups and the public have access to the same information. The notice also specifies that FSIS is seeking information and data on potential impacts of line speed on worker safety.

The notice announcing the extension will be posted on the FSIS website at www.fsis.usda.gov/regulations_&_policies/Proposed_Rules/index.asp and will publish in the *Federal Register*.

Comments may be submitted through the Federal *eRulemaking* Portal at www.regulations.gov, or by mail to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), FSIS, Docket Clerk, Patriots Plaza III, 355 E. St S.W., 8-163A, Mailstop 3782, Washington, DC 20250-3700. All items submitted by mail or electronic mail must include the agency name and docket number, which will be assigned when it is published in the *Federal Register*.

Inside this Issue

| | |
|--|---|
| Fourth Quarter <i>Salmonella</i> and <i>Campylobacter</i> Report | 2 |
| NACMCF Subcommittee to Hold Public Meetings | 3 |
| Advisory Committee Accepting Nominations for Membership | 3 |
| FSIS to Launch Label Submission and Approval System | 4 |
| Codex Public Meeting..... | 4 |



Export Requirement Updates



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

Bahrain
Indonesia
Kuwait
Oman
Qatar
Republic of Korea
Saudi Arabia
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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FSIS Posts Fourth Quarter *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* Report

Today, the agency posted on its website the fourth quarterly progress report of calendar year (CY) 2011 on *Salmonella* testing of selected raw meat and poultry products.

This report provides preliminary data from October to December 2011, on all establishments eligible for *Salmonella* testing that have completed at least two sampling verification sets since June 2006.

As of December 2011, of all establishments in all product classes, 84.5 percent are in category 1, which illustrates a slight decrease from third quarter CY11.

From 137 broiler establishments, 1,537 samples were analyzed with a 4.3 percent positive rate, representing a decrease from the 8.2 percent positive rate for third quarter CY11. This table lists percentages of broiler establishments by category as of December 2011.

| Plant Category | Category 1 | Category 2T | Category 2 | Category 3 |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Percentage of Broiler Establishments | 87 | 4 | 9 | 0 |

FSIS continues to post monthly the names of broiler establishments demonstrating variable or inconsistent process control. The agency highlights performance for the broiler class because of its negative impact on foodborne illness. Since April 2008, FSIS has been posting category 2 and category 3 broiler carcass establishment names. FSIS is not currently posting names for turkey carcass establishments because this product class is meeting the criteria of at least 90 percent of all establishments in category 1 and no establishments in category 3.

FSIS will continue to post monthly the names of poultry establishments demonstrating variable or inconsistent process control.

The complete report and program details are at www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Quarterly_Salmonella_Results/index.asp.

Note: This is also the second quarter to include *Campylobacter* sampling results for young chicken and turkey carcasses. A follow-up *Constituent Update* will be issued to discuss these results in greater detail as more data becomes available.

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.

The agency recently provided a series of updates concerning the following topic: **2010 Nutrition Labeling Rule.**

To view these, visit <http://askfsis.custhelp.com>.

FSIS Policy Update

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

Notice 27-12, *Changes in Sampling Frequency for E. Coli O157:H7 Testing of Beef Manufacturing Trimmings (Mt60)*

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

NACMCF Subcommittee to Hold Public Meetings

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods, Subcommittee on Control Strategies for Reducing Foodborne Norovirus Infections will meet May 8 through May 10, to discuss improving control of the transmission of foodborne Human Noroviruses (HuNoV).

The group will consider HuNoV incidence of infection, attribution in foods, detection methodology as well as the most effective control practices and interventions.

The meetings will take place Tuesday, May 8, through Thursday May 10, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Patriots Plaza III, Rm 9-131, 355 E St., S.W., Washington D.C. 20024. Due to increased security measures, all persons wishing to attend must RSVP in advance. To register, contact Karen Thomas-Sharp at (202) 690-6620 or karen.thomas-sharp@fsis.usda.gov.

Seeking Nominations

USDA is seeking applications and nominations for membership to the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods. Membership is encouraged for individuals with scientific expertise in the fields of epidemiology, food technology, microbiology (food, clinical and predictive), risk assessment, infectious disease, biostatistics and other related sciences.

For consideration, submit a resume and USDA Advisory Committee Membership Background Information form AD-755. The resume or curriculum vitae must be limited to five, one-sided pages and should include educational background, expertise and a list of select publications. For submissions received that are more than five, one-sided pages in length, only the first five pages will be reviewed. USDA Advisory Committee Membership Background Information form AD-755 is available at www.ocio.usda.gov/forms/doc/AD-755.pdf.

Nomination packages can be mailed to Secretary Tom Vilsack, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250, Attn: National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods. Nominations must be received by April 23. Self nominations are also welcome.

For additional information, contact Karen Thomas-Sharp, Advisory Committee Specialist, at (202) 690-6620 or karen.thomas-sharp@fsis.usda.gov. To read the *Federal Register* notice, go to www.fsis.usda.gov/About_FSYS/NACMCF/index.asp.

Webinars Available for Generic Labeling Approval Processes

FSIS will hold webinars on its generic labeling regulations on April 24 and May 22 at 2 p.m. ET.

The webinars are intended to provide guidance on the types of labeling and modifications to previously approved labels that are generically approved by FSIS.

In addition, the webinars will provide an overview of the agency's proposed rule to allow establishments to label a broader range of products without first submitting the label to FSIS for approval.

To access the webinar, go to <https://connect16.uc.att.com/usda/meet/?ExEventID=85277207>

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.

FSIS to Launch Label Submission and Approval System

As mentioned in previous issues of the *Constituent Update*, the Labeling and Program Delivery Division is preparing to launch the Label Submission and Approval System (LSAS). The launch of this system will have a significant impact on the speed and accuracy of label review, as well as the ability to develop data-specific reports based on labeling information.

To use the system, users will need to have USDA "Level 2" e-Authentication (eAuth). Below are the steps to create an account.

1. Log onto www.eauth.egov.usda.gov, and complete the on-line application for approval. USDA will notify you when your account is approved.
2. After you receive your notification of approval, you are required to have a Licensed Registration Agent (LRA) verify your identity in person. You must do this before you can receive a password for your eAuth account. Find an agent in your area using the map provided by eAuth at www.eauth.egov.usda.gov and click on the "Find an LRA" button at the top right corner of the page.

Codex Public Meeting on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Food

FSIS and the FDA will hold a public meeting to receive comments on agenda items and draft U.S. positions to be discussed at the 20th Session of the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF), which will be held in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The public meeting will be held on April 23 from 1 to 4 p.m. ET in the Jamie L. Whitten Bldg., USDA, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Rm. 107-A, Washington, D.C. 20250. Documents and agenda items related to the 20th Session of the CCRVDF are available on the Codex website at www.codexalimentarius.org.

For more information or to submit written comments about the 20th Session of the CCRVDF, contact Kevin Greenlees at (240) 276-8214 or kevin.greenlees@fda.hhs.gov.

For more information about the public meeting, contact Kenneth Lowery at (202) 690-4042 or kenneth.lowery@fsis.usda.gov.