

Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

NACMCF to Hold Meeting on National School Lunch Program Purchases

The National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods (NACMCF) will hold a public meeting via teleconference on March 28 from 2 to 5 p.m. ET.

In February, a NACMCF subcommittee met with members of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) over several days to discuss the purchase of ground beef for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Significant progress was made throughout the course of their meetings, and the subcommittee's comments and findings will be considered by the full committee.

Items on the agenda will include:

- Assistance to the AMS with the Federal Purchase Ground Beef Program;
- *Staphylococcus aureus* and other criteria used in the ground beef purchase for the NSLP; and
- Alternative screening methods for ground beef beyond those in the FSIS Microbiology Laboratory Guidebook and determining acceptable screening procedures.

FSIS will finalize the agenda on or before the meeting and post it on the FSIS website at www.fsis.usda.gov/News/Meetings_&_Events/.

All documents related to the full committee meeting will be available at the USDA-FSIS Room 8-164, Patriots Plaza III, 355 E. St. S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250. Documents will also be available at www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Federal_Register_Notices/index.asp. To register or to provide public comment, contact Karen Thomas-Sharp at (202) 690-6620 or karen.thomas-sharp@fsis.usda.gov.

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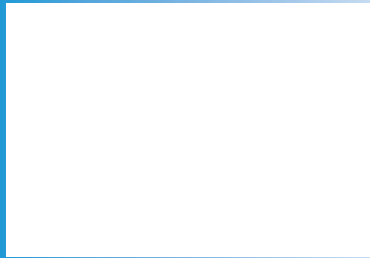
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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Food Safety and
Inspection Service

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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:

Colombia, El Salvador, Hong Kong, Lebanon, Malaysia, Panama, Peru, Saudi Arabia, St. Lucia, Singapore, Thailand, Ukraine, Vietnam

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

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Changes to Export Verification Program

Starting March 19, FSIS will no longer require exporters from certain countries to obtain a Statement of Verification (SOV) from the Agricultural Marketing Service as part of the export certification process for beef and beef products.

Over time, industry has become more vigilant in accurately completing export documentation, which has diminished the need for this second signature. However, FSIS inspection personnel will continue to verify the eligibility of the establishment and product, as outlined in the country's requirements in the FSIS Export Library. Other components of the Export Verification (EV) program will remain in place.

Exporters should refer to the FSIS Export Library, **Notice 20-12** (www.fsis.usda.gov/OPPDE/rdad/FSISNotices/20-12.pdf), and the AMS website at www.ams.usda.gov for information about current EV program requirements.

National Advisory Committee to Discuss Proposed Rule on the Modernization of Poultry Slaughter Inspection

USDA's National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI) will meet next week to review and discuss the proposed rule on the *Modernization of Poultry Slaughter Inspection* that was published in the *Federal Register* on January 27.

This discussion will be held via web conference on March 21, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., ET. FSIS will provide an overview of the proposed rule, followed by an open discussion and public comments. Additional details for this meeting are available at www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/meetings_&_events/index.asp.

Public comments will be accepted until April 23 and may be submitted via e-mail to NACMPI@fsis.usda.gov or mailed to NACMPI, USDA, FSIS, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Rm. 1180, South Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20250. All submissions must include the agency name and docket number FSIS-2012-0016.

For information about the meeting, contact Sally Fernandez at (202) 690-6524 or sally.fernandez@fsis.usda.gov or visit www.fsis.usda.gov.

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.

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline

Food safety experts are available year-round from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET to answer questions in English and Spanish about safely preparing and cooking foods.

The toll-free number is 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854). Recorded messages are available 24 hours a day.

Codex Public Meeting on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Food

FSIS and the FDA are sponsoring a public meeting to receive public comments 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 will be accessible on the Codex website at www.codexalimentarius.org.

The following items will be discussed during the public meeting:

- Draft Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) for Veterinary Drugs;
- Revision of the Committee's Risk Analysis Principles;
- Proposed amendments to the Committee's terms of reference; and
- Risk management recommendations for the veterinary drugs for which no MRL has been recommended by the expert scientific committee because of human health concerns.

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.

Food Safety PSAs Available on YouTube



As part of the *Food Safe Families* campaign, USDA has posted public service announcements (PSAs) called “Check Your Steps”—“Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill.”

PSAs, entertaining depictions of the four key safe food handling behaviors, urge parents to keep their families safe from food poisoning while delivering clear steps to reduce their risk.

Go to www.youtube.com/user/USDAFoodSafety and check out the YouTube USDA Food Safety Channel.

Follow Us on Twitter

Find food safety information for at-risk people along with tips and resources to keep consumers and other interested groups informed of the latest agency news and events. Follow FSIS on Twitter at www.twitter.com/USDAFoodSafety.

Also Tweet En Español

The FSIS Spanish language Twitter feed keeps consumers and other interested communities informed of the latest agency news and events and provides useful food safety tips.

Follow FSIS' Spanish Twitter account at www.twitter.com/usdafoodsafes_es.

Visit USDA's Blog

Every day, the USDA Blog shares something new about USDA's expansive mission. The blog provides a rich and diverse look at the work within the department, spanning the nation—and even the world—and highlights the breadth of USDA programs and the role they play in the lives of every American.

Go to <http://blogs.usda.gov/> and see what's happening within the agency and across the department.

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/>.

Non-O157 STEC Isolated From Cattle Produced in the United States

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1754

Non-O157 STEC Isolated From Cattle Produced Outside the United States

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1755

Procedure for Making Anti-O45 and Anti-O121 Beads

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1756

Availability of Latex Agglutination Reagents for Non-O157 STECs

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1757

Ability of FSIS Laboratories to Offer Non-O157 STEC Testing

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1758

Subtypes of Shiga Toxin and Intimin Genes in Non-O157 STEC Testing

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1759

Order of Establishment Screening Tests for Non-O157 STEC

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1760

Confirmation of Establishment Screening Tests for Non-O157 STEC

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1761

Prohibited Movement of Adulterated Raw Beef Product to Pet Food

http://askfsis.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1762