



Food Safety and Inspection Service

FY 2008 - 2013

STRATEGIC PLAN



“Foundation document for both the long range and day to day operations of the Agency.”

Letter from the Administrator



The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and its employees are very proud to commemorate over 100 years of protecting the food supply under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA). FSIS is the public health regulatory agency that ensures the safety and security of the U.S. meat, poultry, and processed egg products supply. For the past century under FMIA, FSIS and its predecessors have ensured that meat products are safe to consume by carrying out continuous inspections at slaughter and food processing establishments.

The vital services of FSIS have touched the lives of almost every citizen, every day in America. FSIS is accountable for protecting the lives and well-being of 295 million U.S. citizens and millions more around the world. The Agency's 9,500 employees include approximately 7,800 inspection program personnel, who are assigned to approximately 6,200 Federal slaughter, food processing, and import establishments.

To meet future realities of food safety and public health challenges, FSIS requires a strong Strategic Plan. This Plan encompasses our strategic intentions over the next five years, and will serve as a foundation document for both the long range and day to day operations of the Agency. The Strategic Planning process is, and shall be, one of many tools that will ensure that we are prepared for food safety challenges in the next century.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Alfred V. Almanza". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Alfred Almanza
Administrator - FSIS

Executive Summary

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Management Council and their designated representatives on the Strategic Planning and Reporting Team created the Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-2013 Strategic Plan in order to prepare for important new challenges and opportunities that are likely to arise in the coming years. The Plan outlines six goals which reflect the Agency's public health responsibilities. The following goals will help Agency leadership and staffs focus on the day-to-day activities as the entire Agency works toward a vision of the future:

- **Goal 1** - Enhance inspection and enforcement systems and operations to protect public health.
- **Goal 2** - Enhance the use of risk analysis and vulnerability assessments in FSIS' approach to protecting public health.
- **Goal 3** - Enhance the development of science and risk-based policies and systems.
- **Goal 4** - Enhance the development and maintenance of an integrated and robust data collection and analysis system to verify the effectiveness and efficiency of Agency programs.
- **Goal 5** - Enhance the development and maintenance of an innovative infrastructure to support the Agency's mission and programs.
- **Goal 6** - Enhance the effectiveness of Agency outreach and communications to achieve public health goals.

FSIS used the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)'s Circular A-11 as a guide in developing the Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan addresses the key components of the circular. OMB developed sections of the A-11 in order for agencies to maintain compliance with the Strategic Planning requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA).

Congress enacted GPRA in an effort to focus on government management, performance, and results. GPRA establishes requirements for Strategic Planning, performance goals, and ultimately the measurement of success in meeting those goals. Strategic plans, annual performance-based budgets, and annual performance reports comprise the main elements of GPRA. Together, these elements create a recurring cycle of planning, programming, budgeting, accounting, financial management, and reporting.

The Agency formulated its strategic goals and vision around the FSIS Administrator's priorities and the National Academy of Sciences model for a public health regulatory agency. The three areas of emphasis in the model are Assessment, Policy Development, and Assurance. The areas are not unrelated and independent; they are interdependent. The ongoing activities in one have an effect on the other two, and form a "feedback loop" involving all FSIS offices.

FSIS will focus on six Administrator priorities over the next five years. These priorities will drive policies, goals, and actions. The priorities are: Continued Evolution of Inspection and Enforcement, Data and Risk Analysis, Food Defense, Communications, Management Controls and Efficiency, and Training, Education, and Outreach.

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1. OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

FSIS, a public health regulatory agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is responsible for ensuring that the commercial supply of meat, poultry, and processed egg products moving in interstate commerce or exported to other countries is safe, secure, wholesome, and correctly labeled and packaged. Legislative mandates provide FSIS with the authority to conduct its public health mission.

Ensuring the safety of meat, poultry, and processed egg products requires a strong infrastructure. Approximately 7,800 inspection personnel stationed in about 6,200 federally inspected meat, poultry, and processed egg products plants verify that the processing of tens of billions of pounds of red meat and poultry, and billions of pounds of liquid egg products comply with statutory requirements. In addition, billions of pounds of red meat, poultry, and liquid egg products are presented for import inspection at U.S. ports and borders from countries that FSIS has determined to have inspection systems equivalent to Federal inspection systems. Ensuring that these products are safe, secure, and wholesome is a serious responsibility.

Everyone in the food chain, from farmer through consumer, has a responsibility in keeping the food supply safe. Meat, poultry, and processed egg products can be contaminated with bacteria at any point during production, distribution, and consumption. FSIS works closely with other Federal agencies that have some role in the regulation of meat, poultry, and processed egg products along the farm to table continuum. To ensure food safety along this continuum, it is vital that all of FSIS' stakeholders – including other Federal, State, and local governments, producers, the industry, food handlers, and consumers – participate in promoting food safety. Toward this end, FSIS will secure the involvement of stakeholders to achieve its goals.

Most importantly, FSIS' plans for a more robust risk-based system must rely heavily on data to promote proactive decisions affecting food safety and public health. FSIS must, and will, enhance data management and delivery via information technology tools to quickly respond to indications of risk to human health and food defense and do so with utmost efficiency and effectiveness.

FSIS MISSION

Protect consumers by ensuring that meat, poultry, and egg products are safe, secure, wholesome and correctly labeled and packaged.

FSIS will carry out its public health mission through six strategic goals. FSIS' mission is embodied in the staff's dedication to the latest science and public health protection, as well as the mandates established by law. In addition, FSIS will ensure full compliance with all applicable Equal Employment Opportunity Commission regulations, orders, and other written instructions to provide, promote, and maintain equality of opportunity for all USDA employees, applicants for employment, and customers. FSIS prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

FSIS VISION

Provide superior public health protection through risk-based food safety programs that are verified and validated through data systems.

2. PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

FIVE-YEAR PLANNING

The six strategic goals contained in this plan describe FSIS' major programmatic policies and intentions. Each strategic goal will have a brief description or explanation, a discussion of the means and strategies to attain the goal and a stated outcome.

The Strategic Plan also contains several corporate measures that were negotiated with USDA and OMB. These measures act as representative measures for USDA's food safety and food defense efforts. Each measure specifies baseline information and long-term performance targets. In addition, a list of key factors is included to highlight possible challenges to FSIS' stated goals along with a description of how FSIS uses program evaluations and controls to verify that its strategic intentions are being carried out.

The Agency approach to creating this Strategic Plan began with Agency leaders and senior managers establishing initial goals based on the attributes of a National Academy of Sciences public health model. The FSIS Management Council then provided the goals to FSIS' Strategic Planning and Reporting Team in order to identify outcomes that would benefit the public and to contribute to the general narrative throughout the document. The team was composed of representatives selected by each program manager in FSIS. This was done in order to ensure the inclusion of the appropriate decision-makers and subject matter experts during the Strategic Plan's formulation. During the formulation period, Agency leaders and senior management were given the opportunity to review, discuss, and approve the ideas and management concepts in the draft through periodic presentations, status checks, and various drafts. As a result, this process forms not only the nucleus of the FSIS Strategic Plan, but also the food safety portion of the USDA Strategic Plan (2005-2010) and all FSIS budget submissions, program plans, and performance management efforts. The Agency also has action plans to carry out various Federal management initiatives that detail agency approaches for annual improvement in human capital, information technology and eGovernment, financial management, and budget and performance integration. These initiatives are subject to their own metrics and reporting systems.

ADMINISTRATOR'S PRIORITIES

FSIS is holding itself accountable for improving public health. Over the next five years, FSIS will build upon its priorities and continue to improve the Agency's infrastructure with greater attention to risk so that it can then improve overall performance under the public health model. The development and use of an integrated and results driven data collection and analysis system supports achievement of goals in these priority areas:

The Continued Evolution of Inspection and Enforcement

FSIS' policies and practices will continue the evolution of inspection and enforcement for both domestic and imported products. A risk-based approach, encompassing the Agency's actions combined with the Agency's scientific commitment, will facilitate FSIS' ability to combat ever changing threats to public health.

FSIS continues to strengthen its data communication and response infrastructure that protects public health as well as the integrity of the food and agricultural system. An early success to aggregate data across disparate systems has been the development of a data warehouse, which aggregates performance data from domestic and import inspection programs. The user interface for the data warehouse was accomplished through the development of the Enterprise Reporting System (ERS).

The development of ERS has consolidated the existing stove-pipe reporting applications. The implementation of this project set the foundation for the methodology and framework for new system development projects, utilizing the Service Oriented Architecture as the basis for USDA-FSIS system modernization. AssuranceNet, a management control performance monitoring system, utilizes information from the data warehouse, as well, to monitor and alert management. AssuranceNet is currently being expanded to monitor key management control performance measures for all FSIS program areas.

Data and Risk Analysis

FSIS is committed to emphasizing science in the development of food safety policies. A scientific approach to food safety that incorporates risk analysis is critical to FSIS' ability to combat the ever changing threats to public health. Thus, another priority is risk analysis, which includes risk assessment, risk management, and risk communication. In addition to providing regulatory agencies with a solid foundation for policy changes, science-based risk analysis is necessary to help the Agency better predict and respond to food safety threats by allowing staff to focus Agency resources on hazards that pose the greatest threat to public health. Analysis of FSIS regulatory sampling data, as well as other sources of data, including baseline studies, helps the Agency detect trends and identify connections between persistence, prevalence, and other factors such as practices employed by plants, seasonal variations, and establishment size. The Agency's data is being consolidated into a data warehouse and data store to provide a more complete picture of food safety threats from domestic and imported products and to provide traceability for reports to better protect public health.

Food Defense

FSIS has accomplished much in the area of food defense, making a strong system even stronger. The Agency designed its existing science-based food safety and defense verification system, with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) as the foundation, to prevent and control contamination of the food supply during processing, regardless of whether the contamination is naturally occurring or introduced intentionally.

Communications

The Agency has embarked on a comprehensive effort to ensure that all levels and means of communications both within the Agency and with external constituents are as efficient, effective, and rapid as possible. FSIS recognizes that as a public health regulatory agency, the organization is only as effective as the communication systems it has in place. FSIS continuously explores and utilizes a variety of methods to reach its different audiences. The Agency has won awards for its web site and uses leading edge technologies, customer satisfaction surveys, and usability testing to provide easy-to-find, always available quality public health and defense information to keep up with its customers' needs and to better protect public health.

Management Controls and Efficiency

FSIS is seeking to achieve its operational goals and objectives through the most effective means possible. In order to better focus Agency resources, FSIS is establishing a more fully documented management control program. In 2006, the Agency launched its AssuranceNet management control system. Initially launched with over 50 domestic inspection performance measures, version 2.0 launched in early 2007 and increased the monitored performance measures to over 100 including import inspection measures. AssuranceNet is a web-based application that transforms near real-time performance data into valuable decision-making information for managers. It currently extrapolates information from FSIS inspection and import databases plus employee responses to key questions in these areas, as well as administrative duties, to perform complex calculations that graphically display inspection performance indicators in a standard and traceable manner.

The system will be enhanced again in 2008 to include the In-Commerce System for compliance and investigations data entry and performance measures, adding additional inspection measures, integrating a case management system and geographic mapping information, and adding measures for policy. The goal of the system is to have all program areas integrated by the end of 2009. The automated system flags areas that fall below established standards to redirect Agency staff from tedious and intensive data mining efforts to analyzing and acting on the information to better protect public health.

One of the system's goals is to provide a way for analysts and managers to spend less time aggregating and reviewing data and more time spotting issues and trends to target improvements more quickly. Managers can see their results in easily read reports that automatically display measures that exceed their target as red to indicate that further research is warranted. The system also graphically displays standard and custom reports as well as dashboard performance metrics. The system leverages USDA's Enterprise Shared Services (WebSphere and eAuthentication), provides training on AgLearn, follows the web-based applications requirements from version 2 of the USDA Style Guide, and has its front end hosted at the National Information Technology Center (NITC). In 2009, AssuranceNet will expand this performance and management tool to its remaining program areas and the system will become part of the Public Health Information Consolidation Project (PHICP) business case.

Management controls are the organization environment, policies, and procedures used to reasonably ensure that:

- programs achieve their intended results;
- resources are used consistent with Agency mission;
- programs and resources are protected from waste, fraud, and mismanagement;
- laws and regulations are followed; and
- reliable and timely information is obtained, maintained, reported and used for decision making.

Management authority, responsibility, and accountability are more clearly defined and delegated when the Agency documents its management controls. In addition, program performance is routinely analyzed, policies and procedures are regularly updated, management decisions are transparent and traceable, documentation is accurately maintained, and supervision is appropriate and continuous.

Training, Education and Outreach

Training and education of the FSIS workforce is a cornerstone of public health protection. Training enables inspection program personnel to make sound and effective regulatory decisions based on appropriate scientific and public health principles. One of the Agency's top priorities, therefore, is to aggressively train and educate our workforce.



To accomplish this, FSIS is implementing an ongoing strategy to provide employees with a challenging program of initial training when they report to their first assignment; follow-up training that reinforces acquired skills; and advanced skills training to prepare the employee for performing complex public health protection duties. This enables FSIS to maintain a well-trained workforce as the Agency's policies and programs continue to advance to meet the ever-changing needs of public health.

FSIS recognizes the importance of State and local food protection agencies to its food safety-public health mission. That mission demands controls from the farm to the table, often by commercial operations that are regulated primarily by State and local governments. In addition to the 27 State meat and poultry inspection programs, States may assert jurisdiction over the raising and handling of livestock, custom slaughter operations, food warehouses, food transport, and most prominently, retail stores and restaurants.

Over the years, FSIS has sought to support and enhance State and local agencies' capabilities in dealing with food safety issues. Most notably, it has funded a variety of cooperative agreements (discretionary food safety grants) for projects with and for its State and local partners. Although FSIS has not been able to fund such projects the past few years (other than for the Food Emergency Response Network (FERN) food laboratory project), the recent completion of cooperative agreements from FY 2005 and earlier has resulted in valuable work products now being available from FSIS and/or the State and local partners.

Among FSIS' many responsibilities, the Agency inspects "Small and Very Small" meat and poultry slaughter and processing plants. The businesses that fall into this category have a particular need for current and frequent food safety information because they generally lack the resources to monitor food safety developments from the Agency, academia or trade associations. To address this challenge, FSIS has initiated efforts to work with Small and Very Small plants, including another 2,400 (approximately) under state inspections, to overcome these issues. FSIS has implemented an action plan to deliver outreach assistance to promote risk-based food safety and food defense systems for Small and Very Small plants. The reaction to these initial steps has been very positive. However, data from FSAs and recalls show that additional effort is needed. FSIS plans to take further steps to address this challenge by educating, as well as regulating, industry to improve public health and safety. This will ensure rapid and consistent delivery of key Agency services on emerging issues to better serve the needs of Small and Very Small plants. It will also promote an understanding of the scientific, technical, and regulatory information needed domestically and internationally by Small and Very Small plants to develop food safety and food defense systems fully capable of addressing existing and emerging threats to public health.

Among the recommendations of the President's Inter-agency Working Group on Import Safety was enhanced outreach to trading partners to assure that government inspection officials in foreign countries understood the requirements for exporting to the United States. FSIS participates with the Foreign Agricultural Service and other government agencies to provide technical assistance that enhances the ability for foreign manufacturers to produce safe food for export to the United States. FSIS is also embarking on a program to increase the transparency of import requirements to foreign countries and the regulated industry through conversion of the Import Inspection Manual of Procedures to FSIS Directives.

Another area of emphasis for FSIS has been the strengthening of its training for inspection personnel for export verification and certification duties in order to meet both domestic requirements and to meet additional requirements imposed by foreign countries. In addition, the Agency continues to conduct inspection seminars for foreign food safety officials to better familiarize them with the FSIS inspection system, requirements, and accomplishments.

PUBLIC HEALTH MODEL

Though FSIS is already highly active in the areas discussed, it is developing plans to broaden its responsibilities and improve its effectiveness. The Agency is organizing its efforts around the attributes of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) model for a public health regulatory agency. Three major areas of emphasis are widely recognized and accepted by both the Federal and State sectors as defining a public health regulatory institution. These areas are Assessment, Policy Development, and Assurance. These three activity areas, Assessment, Policy Development, and Assurance, are interdependent. The ongoing activities in one area have an effect on the other two, and form a “feedback loop” for all FSIS offices.

PUBLIC HEALTH MODEL



Assessment

The first area, “assessment,” is the activity by which known or potential public health problems are identified and accurately assessed with respect to magnitude of the problem and potential impact on public health. Assessment is carried out using the latest surveillance and testing methods to gather data for conducting the cutting-edge analyses, including quantitative risk assessments, forecasting models, data-mining and trend analysis. Assessment is a continuous and ongoing activity because the nature of the threat to public health is constantly evolving.

In order to institutionalize effective assessment, the Agency must establish and continuously upgrade a first class scientific program that is well designed, funded, and staffed. The scientific program and its professional, technical staff are the very epicenter of a public health regulatory agency and the capabilities of the scientific program define the success of the organization. As an example, to assess the potential threat to public health, FSIS conducts an annual surveillance program through its sampling program to measure the prevalence of *Salmonella*. The surveillance program includes serotyping (confirmatory tests) that identifies the strains of *Salmonella* that cause human illness. Additionally, FSIS has developed models estimating the public health impact of its programs based on pathogen prevalence and other factors. FSIS also continuously analyzes data from domestic and import inspection results, recalls, food safety assessments, and policy questions to determine if FSIS needs to strengthen or clarify its public health policies and procedures.

Policy Development

The second public health model area is “regulatory policy development.” Policy development is defined as the process by which society makes decisions about problems, chooses goals and the proper means to reach them, handles conflicting views about what should be done, and allocates resources to deploy those policies.

Regulatory policy development is the guidance system in a public health regulatory agency. It translates the issues affecting public health into a course of action that addresses problems such as the health consequences associated with pathogens.

Through its regulatory policy development activity, FSIS develops and implements policies to reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses. These activities are firmly based on sound science and decisions are based on weighing public health benefits with societal costs and the technical feasibility for implementing solutions. In the broadest organizational sense, policy development activities include establishing Agency priorities, setting Agency direction, Strategic Planning, issuing regulations, directives, and other policy vehicles, mobilizing resources, training, constituency building, distributing public information, and promoting and coordinating public and private cooperation and outreach.

Assurance

The third area is “assurance”. Assurance is the activity that verifies FSIS performance measures and targets and then validates that the Agency is effective in achieving the desired results. This is the function of providing services and implementing Agency policies and procedures to meet public health needs. One aspect of this is done through policy evaluation and the enforcement of established statutory and regulatory responsibilities which holds industry and the Agency accountable for ensuring that meat, poultry, and processed egg products are safe, secure, wholesome, and accurately labeled. FSIS assurance also occurs through domestic and import inspection activities and verification testing. Some examples of other assurance activities include reviewing the results of the discard rates of samples and addressing the issues that cause sample discards to occur, ensuring that establishments are scheduled for pathogen testing according to program design, and training employees on public health policies and procedures. Today, FSIS inspection activities are increasingly guided by science. Specifically, risk assessments are used to evaluate the public health benefit of allocating inspection resources and guiding inspection activities. The result is more effective risk-based inspection programs that provide improved public health assurance that the meat, poultry, and processed egg products are safe.

AssuranceNet: AssuranceNet is a web-based application that transforms near real-time performance data into valuable decision-making information for managers. It currently extrapolates information from FSIS inspection and import databases plus employee responses to key questions in these areas, as well as administrative duties, to perform complex calculations that graphically display inspection performance indicators in a standard and traceable manner.



CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Through technical conferences and policy deliberations, FSIS continuously examines the Nation's changing food safety system and practices, and articulates a long-term view in regard to the Agency performance and the benefits to public health. Therefore, the following three measures have been selected to represent FSIS as corporate performance measures in both USDA's and OMB's performance management efforts. (Projections as of March 2008 – subject to change)

USDA Strategic Objective 4.1.1: Reduce overall public exposure to generic ***Salmonella*** from broiler carcasses using existing scientific standards

	FSIS Verification Test Results		Performance Objectives ¹					
	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Percent of Establishments in Category I	45%	73%	80%	85%	90%	92%	94%	95%
Volume Adjusted Percent Positive Rate²	11.15%	7.37%	7.2%	7.1%	6.9%	6.8%	6.8%	6.8%
Not Volume Adjusted Percent Positive Rate^{2,3}	12.6%	9.04%	8.8%	8.7%	8.5%	8.4%	8.4%	8.4%

1 Performance objectives were established by assuming a continuous decrease to meet the FY 2010 goal of 90 percent of establishments in Category 1 and FY 2013 goal of 95 percent of establishments in Category 1.

2 Projections are based on the assumption that the average 8.2 percent positive for Category I establishments and average 11.3 percent for Category II and III establishments combined achieved in 2007 remain constant, while the number of establishments in Category I increases.

3 Adjusting for production volume provides measures and objectives that are more representative of FSIS' progress towards preventing cases of human illness.

Salmonella: *Salmonella* bacteria are the most frequently reported cause of foodborne illness. The bacterium lives in the intestinal track of humans and other animals, including birds. *Salmonella* present on and in raw meat and poultry can survive if the product is not cooked to a safe minimum internal temperature, as measured with a food thermometer.

As of June 2006, FSIS began employing a "category" system to measure establishments' *Salmonella* performance due to a change in how the establishments were selected for testing. FSIS compares how many establishments are in "Category 1" from one quarter to the next and from one year to the next. Category 1 represents establishments that have achieved 50 percent or less of the performance standard or baseline guidance, for two consecutive FSIS test sets. Category 2 represents establishments that have achieved greater than 50 percent on at least one of the two most recent FSIS test sets without exceeding the performance standard or baseline guidance. Category 3 represents establishments that

have exceeded the performance standard or baseline guidance on either or both of the two more recent FSIS test sets. For example, for broiler slaughter establishments, the performance standard is constructed such that the standard is met if there are 13 or fewer positive samples in 51 daily tests. Consequently, a Category 1 establishment would have six or fewer positive results in the two most recent 51 sample sets.

As more establishments reach Category 1 status, fewer people will be exposed to *Salmonella* from raw classes of product regulated by FSIS. FSIS set a goal of having 90 percent of establishments achieve Category 1 status by 2010. By then, FSIS will have completed one or more new baseline studies. The results of these new baselines would be to establish new performance standards or baseline guidance and to re-set Category 1, Category 2, and Category 3 criteria.

The Healthy People 2010 goal for *Salmonella* illnesses is 6.8 cases per 100,000. FSIS estimates based upon its public health attribution work that the Health People 2010 goal for Salmonella illnesses from broilers is 0.68 cases per 100,000 or a percent positive rate of 8.5.

USDA Strategic Objective 4.1.2: Decrease the overall-percent-positive rate for *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat products through the use of Food Safety Assessments

	FSIS Verification Test Results		Performance Objectives ^{1,2}					
	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Volume Adjusted Percent Positive Rate ²	0.33%	0.29%	0.27%	0.25%	0.24%	0.24%	0.24%	0.23%
Not Volume Adjusted Percent Positive Rate ²	0.59%	0.37%	0.35%	0.33%	0.30%	0.30%	0.29%	0.29%

1The FY 2013 performance objective was established by assuming a 1 percent reduction from FY 2007.

2 By Executive Order, the Healthy People 2010 goal for *Lm* was to have been met by 2005.

3 Prior to 2008, percent positives for *Lm* were calculated by dividing the total number of samples positive for *Lm* by the total number of samples tested. That method, however, is not representative of the potential exposure to the pathogen, because it does not take into account differences in production volume across the establishments being sampled. For example, an *Lm* positive at a production facility producing a small amount of ready-to-eat products cause fewer *Lm* cases than a positive at a large production facility. Adjusting for production volume provides measures and objectives that are more representative of FSIS' progress towards preventing cases of human illness.

Listeria: *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*) is a bacterium that is recognized as an important public health problem in the United States. The disease listeriosis affects primarily pregnant women, newborns, and adults with weakened immune systems. The bacterium has been found in a variety of raw foods, such as uncooked meats, as well as in processed foods that become contaminated after processing, such as cold cuts at the deli counter.

FSIS combats *Listeria* through the use of Food Safety Assessments (FSAs). An FSA is a comprehensive evaluation of an establishment's food-safety system, including its sanitation controls, its compliance with microbiological performance criteria, the adequacy of slaughterhouse and processing plant Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) systems, the design and operation of its prerequisite programs and its response to food-safety control deviations.

FSIS conducts regulatory sampling of Ready-To-Eat (RTE) products for the presence of *Lm*. *Lm* is the best indicator of sanitary operations for the RTE processing environment at retail. Percent positives indicate the finding of *Lm* in the samples. Therefore, higher percent-positives is a probable indication of higher *Lm* in the food supply regulated by FSIS.

The Healthy People 2010 goal for illnesses dues to *Listeria monocytogenes* is 0.24 cases per 100,000. FSIS estimates based upon its public health attribution work that the Healthy People 2010 goal for Listeriosis illnesses from RTE products is 0.14 cases per 100,000 or percent positive rate of 0.30. FSIS met the Healthy People 2010 goal for Listeriosis illnesses from RTE products in FY 2007. The FY 2013 performance objective was calculated by assuming a one percent annual decrease from the FY 2007 percent positive rate.

USDA Strategic Objective 4.1.3: Reduce the overall public exposure of ***E. coli* O157:H7** in ground beef

	FSIS Verification Test Results		Performance Objectives ¹					
	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Volume Adjusted Percent Positive Rate	<u>0.40%</u>	<u>0.28%</u>	0.23%	0.22%	0.20%	0.18%	0.17%	0.15%
Not Volume Adjusted ² Percent Positive Rate	<u>0.17%</u>	<u>0.20%</u>	0.20%	0.20%	0.19%	0.19%	0.19%	0.19%

1 Performance objectives assume a continuous decrease to meet the FY 2013 goal.

2 The FY 2013 performance objective was calculated by halving the Healthy People 2010 goal for *E.coli* O157:H7 in ground beef.

2 Prior to 2008, percent positives for *E. coli* were calculated by dividing the total number of samples positive for *E.coli* by the total number of samples tested. That method, however, is not representative of the potential exposure to the pathogen, because it does not take into account differences in production volume across the establishments being sampled. For example, an O157:H7 positive at a production facility producing a small amount of ground beef would cause fewer O157:H7 cases than a positive at a large production facility. Adjusting for production volume provides measures and objectives that are more representative of FSIS' progress towards preventing cases of human illness.

***E. coli* O157:H7:** *E. coli* O157:H7 is one of hundreds of strains of the bacterium *Escherichia coli*. Although most strains are harmless, this particular strain produces a powerful toxin that can cause severe illness. *E. coli* O157:H7, in fact, is a leading cause of severe foodborne illness. The organism can be found on most cattle farms. Meat can become contaminated during slaughter, and organisms can be accidentally mixed into meat when it is ground, or blade/needle tenderized. Eating meat, especially ground beef that has not been cooked sufficiently to kill *E. coli* O157:H7, can cause infection. Contaminated meat looks and smells normal. The number of organisms required to cause disease is very small.

In the wake of an increase in the number of *E. coli* O157:H7-positive samples collected in June 2007 by FSIS, and an increase in recalls and illnesses associated with this pathogen, FSIS implemented several risk management initiatives. This strategy is emblematic of FSIS taking into account a broader, more complete range of evidence when evaluating whether to seek a recall or take regulatory action. It is also indicative of FSIS' commitment to building upon its science- and risk-based activities to enhance public health protection and maintain consumer confidence in the safety of the nation's food supply.

The Healthy People 2010 goal for illnesses due to *E. coli* O157:H7 is 1.0 cases per 100,000. FSIS estimates are based upon its public health attribution work (that the Healthy People 2010 goal for illnesses from *E. coli* O157:H7 in ground beef is 0.34 cases per 100,000 or percent positive rate of 0.32). FSIS met this Healthy People 2010 goal for in FY 2006. The FY 2013 performance objective was calculated by halving the Healthy People 2010 goal for *E. coli* O157:H7 in ground beef.



BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE INTEGRATION

One of the five initiatives on the President's Management Agenda (PMA) is Budget and Performance Integration (BPI). This initiative builds on the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) and previous efforts to identify program goals and performance measures and to link them with the budget process. The PMA BPI initiative outlines the criteria that agencies must comply with in the performance of its mission, strategic goals, related business processes and major activities. BPI has two primary goals, which are:

- To use performance information in budgeting; and
- To improve program performance and efficiency.

In addition, FSIS' BPI objectives focus on performance-based budgeting; results-focused program performance assessment; accountability for results and program resources; strategic, organizational, and program level alignment and integration of budget, performance, and accounting information; and alignment of costs. These objectives stress:

- Increased accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency by implementing multi-year plans designed to improve the management and performance of a program;
- Data systems and process integration that provide reliable cost and performance information for planning, programming and budget decision making;
- Investment in high pay-off or high priority activities, which focus mostly on programs that can achieve demonstrably greater results for the same or less cost; and
- Applying the findings of program evaluations, such as OMB's Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) to identify and address program strengths and weaknesses.

FSIS is committed to developing and improving programs that are focused on producing meaningful results for the taxpayer while at the same time protecting public health. FSIS in partnership with USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) procured a Commercial Off the Shelf (COTS) software solution that will enable the integration of budget and performance data to improve the visibility, timeliness, reliability and accuracy of management information for improved decision-making support. This solution for improved performance and accountability is called the Budget and Performance Management System (BPMS) which has been selected as the official budgeting system for USDA by the Departmental Chief Financial Officer. FSIS and FSA are in the process of creating data models to integrate Agency-wide performance and accountability capabilities, processes and systems.

The BPMS framework will facilitate FSIS' transformation to a results-focused, performance-based organization and the implementation of the PMA BPI initiative.



BPMS consists of the following major components:

- Framework for Budget and Performance Integration
- Salary and Benefits Projections
- Budget Formulation
- Budget Execution
- Cost Management
- Cost per Unit Metrics
- Activity Based and Reimbursables Cost Models
- Activity Reporting System (with NFC solution)
- Performance Improvement
- Scorecarding

The BPMS solution will support the following intermediate objectives:

- To reduce the time spent performing manual data entry tasks within the Chief Financial Officer organization;
- To reduce the time spent compiling, verifying and validating performance reporting information;
- To improve the quality, timeliness and controls for budget and cost information through use of a common framework and data source;
- To fully cost 100 percent of FSIS programs within five years, and align these programs to the Strategic Planning framework in support of Department and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reporting and analysis requirements;
- To allow budgeting information to be accessible outside of the budget organization through web-enabled access to budget, cost, and performance information; and
- To increase insights into cost and performance via linkages between cost, operational efficiency, and strategic performance as outlined in the Strategic Plan framework.

OPERATING ENVIRONMENT AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

A number of environmental and external factors can impact the Agency's priorities and goals. These include the following:

Additional Major Outbreaks/New or Emerging Pathogens

Even with a comprehensive in-plant and import inspection system, major outbreaks of foodborne illness can occur, depending on the handling and preparation of meat, poultry, and processed egg products by commercial establishments and individual consumers. Ongoing research may also identify new and emerging strains of organisms that can cause foodborne illness.

Industry Demand

FSIS sees ever increasing demand for meat, poultry, and processed egg products both here and abroad. The projected growth in demand for meat and poultry products requires an ever-adapting front-line of inspection personnel.

When FSIS received its final appropriation from Congress in February 2007, the Agency had already begun an aggressive effort to hire a significant number of new inspectors and reduce vacancy rates. By the end of September 2007, FSIS had already hired more than 600 new in-plant personnel. After accounting for those who retired or left FSIS, the Agency has achieved a net gain of approximately 160 in-plant positions filled for FY 2007. FSIS expects to achieve its goal of hiring a net increase of 184 inspectors, and an additional 12 new inspectors in New Mexico. In FY 2007, New Mexico voluntarily turned its State program over to FSIS. Since hiring employees takes an average of 12 weeks under the most ideal conditions, and may extend anywhere from five to six months for positions in hard-to-fill locations, it is evident that the Agency worked very hard to meet hiring goals and reduce vacant positions. FSIS has pioneered the aggressive use of existing and new staffing authorities to fill mission-critical positions, especially for in-plant and front-line positions, where 85 percent of FSIS employees are located.

Research and Surveillance

Because FSIS does not conduct research, it must rely on other organizations to conduct the research it needs to support its public health mission. These other organizations have included the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), Economic Research Service (ERS), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), as well as academia and other private sources who conduct the research needed to fill data gaps that are necessary to conduct risk assessments and make risk management decisions.

Growth in the Agency's food safety and food defense responsibilities is reflected not merely in the volume of product inspected and shipped, but also dramatically in the need to cover complex public health issues associated with the handling of meat, poultry, and processed egg products outside of the federally inspected establishments. These responsibilities include surveillance of the transportation, storage, and distribution of inspected products for intentional and non-intentional chemical, biological and physical contamination of inspected products; conducting investigations to detect, prosecute and deter criminal violations; performing food defense activities including assessment and emergency response; covering and follow-up of recalls; conducting illness outbreak and consumer complaint investigations; and auditing and reviewing of State and foreign inspection programs.

To meet these responsibilities, the Office of Program Evaluation, Enforcement and Review (OPEER) is developing an In-Commerce system to improve the Agency's ability to prioritize, analyze, and focus its resources on targeted food safety and food defense in-commerce activities. The In-Commerce system will collect data to push to the Agency data warehouse and retrieve its own and other related data from the data warehouse, enabling improved response time to events that warrant immediate action and in the alerting of Agency executives. The investigative staff will also provide FSIS with the ability to synthesize findings from case studies to identify common trends in plant performance and inspection program operations, root causes of development problems, and options for proactive solutions.

Risk-Based Inspection

FSIS is designing procedures to replace traditional inspection systems for slaughter and processing operations. Under an optimal risk-based inspection system, the type and intensity of inspection activity at each establishment would be determined by an analytical process that permits inspectors to anticipate problems and focus their efforts on those processes and establishments most likely to have control issues and pose a public health risk. FSIS recognizes each step taken toward risk-based systems must further protect public health.

In FY 2008, FSIS will continue its major focus on the design and implementation of this more robust risk-based inspection system. While FSIS maintains that its current system is strong, the Agency must adapt to the ever-changing realities of food safety and public health. The Agency envisions a number of advantages offered by a more robust risk-based system. In particular, a risk-based system can be fluid, rapidly adapting to emerging hazards. It can more easily identify problems that have occurred and anticipate problems to minimize risk. This more robust system will allow the Agency to align resources with the corresponding level of risk posed by specific hazards, products, and processes.

FSIS has already made progress toward a risk-based approach to food safety, especially in the risk-based approach to pathogen control. An example is the FSIS verification sampling program for *Listeria monocytogenes*. Under this initiative, FSIS structures its verification activities to the interventions that plants choose to adopt and to the potential for *Listeria* growth in their products. In other words, FSIS conducts less sampling in those plants that have in place the best control programs for *Listeria* and more sampling, as well as in-depth Food Safety Assessments, in plants that adopt less vigorous programs.

FSIS' goal is to further enhance and strengthen this risk-based system. Based on the Agency's progress with *Listeria*, FSIS has been developing a risk-based verification system for *E. coli* O157:H7, and announced in February 2006 an 11-step strategy for *Salmonella*. FSIS will take this risk-based approach further by using inspection data and other information to determine the hazard from product type and plant performance to determine the intensity of inspection at processing plants and import inspection facilities.

The Agency will apply the risk-based focus to imported products as well. Using information from on-site audits, port-of-entry inspections and other sources, decisions can be made as to the level and scope of enforcement needed in order to assure that imported products continue to meet U.S. food safety requirements.

Threats and Acts of Terrorism Directed at the Nation's Food Supply

As the possibility of purposeful food contamination for political and ideological gain has grown, bio-terrorism and bio-security are terms that have made their way into the dialogue on food safety. Expansion in the bio-security area may result in a different allocation of resources.

Food contamination, animal and plant diseases, and infestations can have catastrophic effects on human health and the economy. USDA, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Department of Homeland Security are working together to create a comprehensive food and agriculture policy that will improve the Government's ability to respond to the dangers of disease, pests and poisons, whether foreign or domestic in origin and whether naturally or intentionally introduced.

Legislative Action and Federal Management Mandates

The mission and programs of FSIS are grounded in legislative mandates. Changes in Federal mandates and legislation could affect what the Agency does and how it does it.

Budget Constraints/Balanced Budget

Limited budgets and workforce size could unfavorably impact the Agency's implementation of program change and innovation, as well as the achievement of current inspection goals.

Unionized Labor

As a major stakeholder in FSIS programs, unionized labor could alter conditions under which changes are made.

Consumer and Industry Organizations (i.e., special interest groups)

Our stakeholders advocate modification of USDA's food safety activities and methods, sometimes resulting in different program expectations and priorities.

New Scientific Technologies

New in-plant equipment and processes could impact program objectives through faster processing times and create a need for more product testing and sampling, resulting in a realignment of resources.

Public Opinion

The media shapes and molds public opinion, and therefore food safety goals and objectives could be modified based on media views, representations, and pressure resulting in a different application of resources, both human and capital.

Political Imperatives

Legislative or administration priorities could impact Departmental and Agency leadership, which could result in new missions, programs, and goals.

Codex Alimentarius

FSIS works through the Codex Alimentarius Commission to help develop international food safety standards. Member countries are encouraged to accept and implement Codex-approved standards nationally, but they are not obligated to do so. Adopting Codex standards could result in a different allocation of resources.

Trade Issues

As a member of the World Trade Organization, the United States is party to agreements that establish rights and obligations in international trade. In addition, internal and external transportation or trade

issues could impact Agency goals and objectives through trade barriers or conflicting standards which could result in product delays and affect markets.

The United States continues to struggle for market access in important Asian markets after the initial discovery of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in December 2003. However, U.S. beef exports are forecast to climb over 19 percent in 2008 to around 775,000 tons due to increased opportunities in the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) area. U.S. beef maintains strong sales to Canada and Mexico, while slowly making inroads in the Japanese market despite being impeded by a 20 month or younger age restriction and the age-verification process. The USDA Secretary has urged Japan, as well as all U.S. trading partners, to implement import requirements for beef and beef products as soon as possible that are based on science and consistent with international guidelines, including those of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

In addition to challenging import requirements, the U.S. beef industry has experienced difficulties with Asian countries rejecting shipments due to errors made during the assembly of lots for export. These “mispack” problems have been seized upon by Asian importing countries as a means to further restrict trade with U.S. beef producers even though no food safety hazards are involved. The U.S. industry and government regulatory agencies have continuing programs in place to minimize commercial errors that have adversely affected beef trade. These programs, combined with robust trade negotiation policies, have resulted in significant renewals of U.S. market access for beef products that were formerly banned due to BSE concerns.

New Scientific Advances

Newly developed understanding of the epidemiology of foodborne diseases and the association between animal pathogens and human foodborne illness could result in significant reallocation of resources. Risk assessments based on increased scientific knowledge could identify new points in the farm-to-table continuum where risk reduction mitigations could be applied to decrease the level of human foodborne illness.



STRATEGIC GOAL ONE

Enhance inspection and enforcement systems and operations to protect public health.

PUBLIC OUTCOMES

- FSIS achieves improving levels of performance in daily food safety and food defense operations.
- FSIS has a workforce of proficient personnel, who know their duties and responsibilities.
- Meat and poultry inspection is concentrated at points of greatest risk.
- Oversight of imported products is targeted at areas of greatest risk.
- The Nation enjoys safer, more secure domestic and imported food products.
- Effective response procedures for non-routine (emergency) incidents are in place.
- Monitoring and surveillance systems to support food defense preparedness activities are in place.
- Effectively monitored foodborne illness report data, which is utilized to reassess FSIS-regulated plants.
- Progressive studies designed to attribute illness to specific foods are available.

OBJECTIVES

- Expanded use of performance-based management controls to verify risk-based inspection.
- Effectively enabled teams of inspectors to carry out risk-based inspection.
- More informed food safety and defense actions and interventions deployed.
- Increased document analyses and on-site audits of Federal and State inspection systems and establishments.
- Enhanced data collection and integration to strengthen oversight of foreign inspection systems.
- Developed, launched, and maintained automated system to support Agency's response to non-routine (emergency) incidents.
- A surveillance system which integrates inter-Agency and national information to improve situational awareness and early detection.
- Rigorous enforcement actions and sanctions against violations of food safety laws and regulations.
- Enhanced Agency food safety and defense IT systems.
- Enhanced IT data coordination activities with other Federal agencies.
- Strengthened public health, scientific, and technical skills of the Agency workforce.

MEANS AND STRATEGIES

FSIS has the statutory authority and responsibility for protecting the public health by assuring that meat, poultry, and processed egg products are wholesome, not adulterated, and properly labeled. The governing statutes give the Agency the authority to protect the health and welfare of consumers by promulgating regulations governing the production, import and distribution of these products and to

enforce the laws through food safety and food defense inspection, surveillance, and assurance. FSIS also has the authority to control product, temporarily stop operations, and to refuse or withdraw inspection, and to implement administrative, criminal, and civil action. The Agency carries out this mission with an in-plant workforce of approximately 7,800 inspection program personnel.

Using authorities and resources at its disposal, FSIS will ensure the safety and defense of the nation's domestic and imported food supply through the:

- allocation of in-plant inspection resources on the basis of the risk inherent in products, processes, and producers;
- ongoing use of Food Safety Assessments to
 - provide evaluations of establishment food safety systems;
 - provide guidance and baseline information that plants can use to improve their systems; and
 - verify industry's compliance with risk-based strategies for pathogens;
- implementation and continuous improvement of performance-based management control systems;
- implementation and use of team inspection to evaluate and assure plant compliance with food safety statutes;
- coordination of the use of investigative resources at ports-of-entry and in food warehousing, distribution, and retail channels;
- use of strong, timely, and effective enforcement actions; and audits of domestic and State foreign inspection systems and establishments. Investigation and enforcement strategies and actions will be based on risk through enhanced data collection and analysis, and development and application of risk-based measures; and
- use of a wide range of integrated data gathered through port-of-entry inspection, on-site audits and other sources to evaluate the continued equivalence of inspection systems in foreign countries exporting to the United States.

Enhanced Agency data systems and effective integration of technology: These efforts will improve the timeliness and effectiveness of Agency public health protection (i.e., regulatory verification, investigation and enforcement activities) and ensure immediate and effective food safety and defense incident response. Information technology (IT) modernization efforts will provide critical support to ongoing initiatives to consolidate Agency data for predictive analytics and integration, identify data gaps, and modernize and facilitate sample collection data reporting. Participation in the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Automated Commercial Environment/International Trade Data System (ACE/ITDS) will effectively coordinate FSIS food inspection and protection activities and FSIS import and export IT systems with 27 Federal agencies and enhance food safety and food defense protection from threats from imported foods. FSIS will also create a new, innovative risk-based, web-based inspection IT system to integrate Agency risk-based policies with Agency domestic and foreign inspection systems. The system will collect and analyze information from the Agency's data warehouse. The In-Commerce System will support the Agency's directives on surveillance and compliance, support food defense requirements in the field, provide a case management system, and graphically display area management controls and performance measures, alerting managers when targets have been exceeded.

Codex: FSIS hosts the U.S. Codex office, which manages the participation of FSIS and other U.S. government regulatory officials and non-governmental organizations in the work of the Codex Commission and its Committees. FSIS is actively involved in the Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems (CCFICS) which develops principles and guidance for food import and export certification and inspection, as well as the Committee on Food Hygiene, which develops guidance on food hygiene principles and microbiological risk analysis. FSIS will continue active involvement in assuring that scientific principles are the basis for the international standards

developed by the Commission.

Workforce training and education: Training and education of the FSIS workforce is a cornerstone of public health protection. Training enables inspection program personnel to make sound and effective regulatory decisions based on appropriate scientific and public health principles. One of the Agency's top priorities, therefore, is to aggressively train and educate our workforce. To accomplish this, FSIS is implementing an ongoing strategy to provide employees with a challenging program of initial training when they report to their first assignment; follow-up training that reinforces acquired skills; and advanced skills training to prepare the employee for performing complex public health protection duties. This enables FSIS to maintain a well-trained workforce as the Agency's policies and programs continue to advance to meet the ever-changing needs of public health.



STRATEGIC GOAL TWO

Enhance the use of risk analysis and vulnerability assessments in FSIS' approach to protecting public health.

PUBLIC OUTCOMES

- Risk-based measures strengthen regulatory verification and enforcement activities on behalf of the consumer.
- Assessments are used to identify physical, chemical, biological, and radiological hazards for domestic and imported products.
- Plants are continuously reassessed based on foodborne illness data.
- A research agenda, developed with ARS, is in place to support food safety and food defense initiatives.

OBJECTIVES

- Increased effectiveness of risk-based regulatory and enforcement activities.
- Improved linkages between homeland and food defense policies and systems.
- Increased risk assessments.
- Rapidly identified and addressed vulnerabilities in food defense, program integrity, and resource management.
- Increased number of sources that dispense public health information.
- Increased number of FSIS- regulated establishments with developed and implemented functional food defense plans.

MEANS AND STRATEGIES

To achieve this goal, FSIS has adopted the well-recognized scientific approach of Risk Analysis in its efforts towards applying resources in a prudent manner. The Risk Analysis approach contains three aspects:

- **Risk Assessment:** the process of estimating the severity and likelihood of harm to human health or the environment occurring from exposure to a substance or activity that, under plausible circumstances, can cause harm to human health or the environment;
- **Risk Management:** the process of evaluating policy alternatives in view of the results of risk assessment and selecting and implementing appropriate options to protect public health. Risk management determines what action to take to reduce, eliminate, or control risks. This includes establishing risk assessment policies, regulations, procedures, and a framework for decision making based on risk; and
- **Risk Communication:** the process of exchanging information among risk assessors, risk managers, other stakeholders, and the public about levels of health or environmental risk, the significance and meaning of those risks, and the decisions, actions, or policies aimed at managing or controlling the risks.

Using the risk analysis approach, FSIS will then use the Public Health Model (i.e., assessment, policy development, and assurance) to ensure that the risk mitigation strategies are working as intended. Assessment will include collecting and analyzing relevant data to determine whether inspection activities are protecting public health. Policy development will include developing enhanced methods to better ensure that inspection activities are best protecting public health. Finally, assurance will include evidence-based analysis of data to demonstrate that public health policy is effective and applied as intended.

FSIS will develop and apply real-time measures of how well slaughter and processing establishments, exempt facilities (operations that qualify under exceptions specified in Section 623 of the Federal Meat Inspection Act, Section 464 of the Poultry Products Act, and 9 CFR § 303 of the livestock regulations and 9 CFR § 831 Subpart C of the poultry regulations), food warehouses, distributors, importers, food handlers, and others control the biological, chemical and physical hazards, and food defense risks inherent in or attendant to their operations.

FSIS will also develop Food Safety Assessments (FSA) to provide information contributing to the design of an establishment's food safety system. The assessments identify gaps and weaknesses in the establishment's HACCP plan and how well the plant addresses the biological, chemical, and physical hazards in its system as well as in its implementation of its system.

Together, these FSIS program functions will enhance risk and vulnerability assessments, decision making, and Agency regulatory verification and enforcement. FSIS will ensure open communication throughout these processes.

The manager of the U.S. Codex Office, as head of the U.S. Delegation to the Codex Committee on General Principles (CCGP), continues to act as the lead advocate for U.S. interests in the development of documents such as *Working Principles for Risk Analysis for Food Safety for Application by Governments*, which seeks to establish risk analysis as a key element of a national food safety system, and to encourage its use among the 172 countries that are members of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.



STRATEGIC GOAL THREE

Enhance the development of science and risk-based policies and systems.

PUBLIC OUTCOMES

- The Nation has a fully implemented risk-based inspection system.
- Highly regarded science-based regulatory policies and guidance documents are available to food safety educators, State partners, industry stakeholders, and foreign trading partners.

OBJECTIVES

- Increased public health policies backed by risk assessments, epidemiological data, evaluations, and other data.
- Increased policy development and outreach activities prioritized based on their impact on public health.
- Increased food defense policies, programs, and interventions developed to address systemic vulnerabilities found in assessments.
- Strengthened risk-based inspection system based on the findings of program evaluations and other studies.
- Integrated information technology and policy development applied to the risk-based inspection system nationwide.
- Reduced *Salmonella* in Ready-to-eat (RTE) and Not Ready-to-eat (NRTE) products consistent with Healthy People 2010 and Healthy People 2020 goals through development and implementation of policy.
- Reduced *E. coli* 0157:H7 and other Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC) consistent with Healthy People 2010 and Healthy People 2020 goals through development and implementation of policy.
- Reduced *Listeria monocytogenes* in RTE and NRTE products consistent with Healthy People 2010 and Healthy People 2020 goals through development and implementation of policy.

MEANS AND STRATEGIES

To ensure food safety from farm-to-table, it is vital that all of FSIS' stakeholders understand the Agency's mission and, at a minimum, have the knowledge and information necessary to comply with regulatory requirements. Because of its food safety and defense responsibilities and its presence in plants, FSIS depends upon a large and dedicated workforce to inspect the Nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and processed egg products. Since meat, poultry, and processed egg products are of animal origin, they are not sterile and can be contaminated with bacteria at any point during production, distribution, and consumption. Due to the enormity of the task, science-based policy development is necessary to achieve more positive and measurable public health outcomes. Consumer food handling recommendations will be increasingly based on scientific and risk research, social marketing concepts, and evaluative research.

With the implementation of the Pathogen Reduction/HACCP systems rule, FSIS has already made significant advances in improving the inspection system. FSIS will further enhance this system to

anticipate and quickly respond to food safety challenges before they adversely affect public health. FSIS will use measures of inherent product risk, exposure, and establishment risk control to better allocate resources for protecting the public health. FSIS will continually collect and analyze inspection, microbiological, enforcement and other types of data to better target higher risk operations. FSIS will capture this information in the inspection system, which will integrate Agency risk-based inspection policies and data with other Agency IT systems.

FSIS already collects data on imported products and the results of FSIS inspection at the port of entry. This information, along with the results of on-site and document audits, will be used to develop measures of risk presented by individual foreign inspection systems so that FSIS can assure the appropriate frequency and scope of its oversight.

FSIS is also dedicated to participating in the Healthy People 2010 and Healthy People 2020 initiatives. These comprehensive, cross-cutting public health studies outline two decades of national health goals, and define critical measures that the U.S. must undertake to promote healthy behaviors, achieve improved health outcomes, reduce risk factors, and assure access to preventive strategies and services that aspire to improve the health of all Americans.

In addition, the U.S. Codex Office will continue to coordinate an inter-Agency effort that ensures the incorporation of the U.S. national objectives for science and risk-based policies and systems into the positions that are presented by U.S. delegations at meetings of the Codex Alimentarius Commission and the Commission's various subsidiary bodies.



STRATEGIC GOAL FOUR

Enhance the development and maintenance of an integrated and robust data collection and analysis system to verify the effectiveness and efficiency of Agency programs.

PUBLIC OUTCOMES

- Continuous monitoring, assessment, and enhancement of public health protection activities are carried out each day by enforcement and field inspection personnel throughout the United States.
- Improved data analyses infrastructure supporting science-based policies and initiatives on food safety and food defense.
- Enhanced Agency systems providing timely data for planning, evaluating, decision making, and policy development.
- Integrated data systems with other Federal agencies to provide seamless oversight of imported products.
- Enhanced Agency system for issuing export certificates that integrates domestic and foreign country requirements.

OBJECTIVES

- Integrated IT linking outreach, inspection, compliance, and enforcement efforts.
- Effective, real-time monitoring and assessment of public health regulatory activity.
- Improved scientific tools and techniques to reduce or eliminate hazards.
- Improved association of program outcomes to public health surveillance data.
- Identified key control activities and established performance measures for program activity.
- Expanded use of data analysis to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of Agency programs.
- Linked AssuranceNet with the Agency's data warehouse so that Agency goals and objectives are met (Agency data warehouse is where multiple sources of data are fed so Agency programs can easily access it.)
- Developed and launched Enterprise Reporting System to provide a more holistic view of the Agency's data for analysis.
- Established integrated data analysis infrastructure to identify early trends or indicators in order to intervene and/or develop science-based policies in inspection and enforcement systems.
- Developed automated export certification system that incorporates all domestic and foreign country requirements to strengthen security and assurances that exported shipments will move unhampered in international trade.

MEANS AND STRATEGIES

FSIS has established and documented a management control system. Management control is a process designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of the effectiveness

and efficiency of operations and programs; reliability of financial reporting; and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Program areas continuously monitor their management controls to demonstrate the effectiveness of their activities and to evaluate their impact to the Agency's public health mission and food defense activities. Management controls use performance measures as a means to quantitatively determine their effectiveness.

AssuranceNet is the Agency's automated management control and performance measure monitoring system to help managers make informed decisions for program improvement. Using real-time data, the system generates standard reports for managers on the effectiveness of specific activities. Currently, the Office of Field Operations and Office of International Affairs are using AssuranceNet, and other program areas will follow in a phased approach. The Agency will expand the capabilities of AssuranceNet as other program areas are phased in.

FSIS is leveraging AssuranceNet for the Agency's In-Commerce System. The In-Commerce System will improve the Agency's ability to schedule, analyze, and focus its resources on high-risk food safety and food defense in-commerce activities. It will provide all program offices with a central repository for reporting, managing and analyzing in-commerce data collected both within and outside of FSIS. These data will also be incorporated in the public health data infrastructure for analysis with other Agency data.

To support data-driven decision-making, FSIS has developed the first phase of a data warehouse to centralize and integrate Agency data into a single, reliable source of Agency knowledge. The data warehouse will continue to grow and expand to contain all corporate food safety and food defense data, both within the Agency and from external partners.

FSIS has developed phase one of the Enterprise Reporting System (ERS) to provide analysts and managers access to corporate data for making efficient and effective public health decisions. The development of ERS sets the groundwork for the architectural direction and technology to be used for the future FSIS systems, specifically the development of the Public Health Information System (PHIS) under the Public Health Information Consolidation Project (PHICP). The PHICP incorporates the replacement for PBIS – the Domestic Inspection System, the replacement for AIIS 3 (the Automated Import Information System), the replacement/re-scoping of the Food and Agriculture Bio-surveillance Information System (FABIS) into the Food and Agriculture Safety and Public Health Analytical System. It also provides enhancements for the Consumer Complaint Monitoring System II that will allow state programs to share their public health data directly with the Agency.

Both ERS and AssuranceNet will be integrated into the newly developed FSIS technical architecture under PHICP. FSIS has developed, and will continue to enhance AssuranceNet, the Agency's automated management control system, to analyze the effectiveness of Agency policy and procedures. AssuranceNet makes use of the Enterprise Reporting System for its reports, as will the PHIS.

FSIS will employ data analysis as a management verification measure in determining the success of Agency strategies to combat threats to food safety and defense and to help ensure that program components are effective in meeting public health goals and objectives. FSIS will use regulatory verification, compliance, enforcement, sampling, and other data and information to discern trends, causes, and outcomes to determine whether the Agency's inspection, verification, enforcement, compliance, and stakeholder outreach are effective in protecting the public health.

In addition, FSIS continually evaluates the effectiveness of its messages to meet the needs of its stakeholders. The communication programs within FSIS do more than provide clear and focused messages about public health through food safety. They move beyond their message development activities to monitor the actual impact that they are having on the public health. FSIS educational campaigns continue to use social marketing and educational principles to identify barriers and target audiences.

STRATEGIC GOAL FIVE

Enhance the development and maintenance of an innovative infrastructure to support the Agency's mission and programs.

PUBLIC OUTCOMES

- Comprehensive, accurate, real-time information for decision-making.
- Effective Agency-wide system of management controls.
- An effective and efficient IT data collection system that meets all Federal IT security requirements.
- Effective Agency strategic management of human capital to carry out food safety mission.
- Effective recruitment of the most qualified inspection personnel and support staffs in filling Agency mission critical positions.
- Effective Agency budget and performance integration to efficiently carry out food safety mission.

OBJECTIVES

- Improved management controls and operating procedures for all FSIS programs.
- Eliminated barriers that impede free and open competition in the workplace by ensuring that all policies, processes and procedures provide all individuals the opportunity to develop, participate and compete equitably.
- Utilized best-practices in human capital management to structure and deploy a competitive, highly skilled workforce, representative of America's great diversity that can more effectively meet Agency staffing challenges.
- Informed decision-making through improved fiscal management and through the implementation of budget and performance integration.
- Focused accountability of FSIS management through Strategic Planning, budget planning, and program planning.
- Enhanced delivery of program services by building a more robust logistical and acquisition infrastructure.
- Effective high-speed Internet access for inspection program personnel.
- Protected FSIS Mission Critical IT systems and essential infrastructure.
- Effective data systems and process integration that provide reliable cost and performance information for planning, programming, and budget decision making.
- Maximized high pay-off or high priority activities, which focus mostly on programs that can achieve demonstrably greater results for the same or less cost.
- Applied findings of program evaluations, such as OMB's Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) in order to identify and address program strengths and weaknesses.
- A positive workplace environment that is free of unlawful discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and accessible to individuals with disabilities.

- Recognized, appreciated and valued diversity, thereby creating and maintaining an organizational culture based on mutual respect, trust, and inclusiveness.
- Equal opportunity in employment through the enforcement of the Federal civil rights laws and through education and technical assistance.
- A model Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program through the robust achievement of model Title VII and Rehabilitation Act programs.

MEANS AND STRATEGIES

Over the next five years, the enhancement of the Agency's administrative infrastructure means broadening the use of management controls, strengthening financial reporting, more closely managing human capital, expanding information technology systems, and implementing performance-based budgeting.

FSIS will continue the implementation of an integrated, Agency-wide Management Control System. Portions of this system have already been implemented with the development and fielding of AssuranceNet. Currently, the Office of Field Operations and the Office of International Affairs use AssuranceNet to monitor their daily public health regulatory activities, and soon all remaining FSIS Program areas and functions will be incorporated into this system.

FSIS is dedicated to improving its Management Control system, which highlights the standards and organizational responsibilities for the accountable and efficient use of resources. The Management Control system consists of five interrelated components (control environment, risk assessment, control activities, information and communication, and monitoring.) Management Controls, when effectively applied by FSIS program leadership, will serve to assure that the Agency maintains its course toward achievement of its strategic goals and objectives.

FSIS will continue to improve its control system by evaluating and applying audit findings from outside entities. The FSIS Management Control system complies with OMB Circular A-123 requirements. The Agency has initiated Management Control audits to test the effectiveness of program areas' Management Controls and verify that they are achieving program objectives. Protocols for a new control audit to systematically assess, verify, and test Agency-wide Management Controls have also been developed. This audit will improve operational and administrative management efficiencies, cost effectiveness accountability, and managerial oversight in support of the FSIS efforts to achieve a Green rating on the PMA, Human Capital Management, and USDA Strategic Plan goals.

FSIS will seek creative ways to improve the Agency's communications program, both internally and externally. These communication activities will provide greater support to the Agency's public health and food defense initiatives.

The Agency will continue to provide an effective IT infrastructure that meets all Federal IT security requirements to support mission-critical activities. FSIS personnel use IT systems to record and report information about their daily food safety, food defense, and humane handling verification and enforcement activities. FSIS IT systems permit enforcement inspection and in-commerce personnel to electronically access and retrieve documents that contain information that they need to properly perform their inspection duties.

Agency IT systems also permit enforcement and inspection program personnel to participate in computer-based on-line training and allows them to obtain timely updates to enforcement and inspection-related computer applications. To ensure that FSIS' IT systems continue to be effective and efficient in assisting enforcement and inspection personnel to conduct their inspection activities, FSIS continues to implement a plan to upgrade its IT systems and provide its in-commerce and inspection assignments with high-speed Internet access. FSIS will also continue its IT modernization efforts to consolidate Agency data and modernize and facilitate sample collection for data reporting.

The IT Public Health Data Communication Infrastructure System: A public health communications infrastructure was proposed by FSIS in May 2006. This system will integrate the needs of the Agency's internal and external customers and protect public health by providing reliable, up-to-date and securely accessible information and analysis for decision-makers, especially to support risk-based inspection, food defense, and predictive (rather than solely reactive) analysis. The infrastructure will also support timely, consistent and reliable internal and external communications with stakeholders and use current and approved business needs to drive technology decisions.

The FSIS Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) is working to improve current IT data and information for its customers by instituting an enterprise architecture (EA) governance process that will enable the Agency to support its current state, as well as transition to its target environment. This EA governance process, which includes the Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) processes, Strategic Planning processes, and FSIS Systems Development Life Cycle (SDLC) methodologies, is a significant component of the public health communications infrastructure. The FSIS EA documentation describes governance and program management areas, organizational structure and management controls, baseline and target architectures, and a transition plan by which FSIS seeks to continue to achieve its overarching mission, goals, and objectives in support of the Federal government and citizens at-large. The Agency is also shifting toward documented management controls, performance measures, the President's Management Agenda (PMA), and defining business needs to drive IT systems to support strategic decision-making, planning and communications.

The Public Health Information Consolidation Practices: The Public Health Information Consolidation Projects (PHICP) investment will incorporate the development of three major applications that were previously separate major and minor investments: Performance Based Inspection System (PBIS), Automated Import Information System (AIIS), and a re-scoped Food and Agriculture Bio-surveillance Information System (FABIS) into the FSIS Public Health Information System (PHIS). This consolidation effort will also ensure the streamlining of the three major areas into a single system with various modules to address each business function. The new development effort will result in the creation of the PHIS. This will include the following major business functions/modules:

- Domestic Products
- Imported Products
- Exported Products
- Predictive Analytics

The Domestic, Imported, and Exported products all contain common functions that will be incorporated into each of the modules. Some of the common functions include:

- Inspection
- Surveillance
- Enforcement
- Scheduling

The development effort will span an initial development lifecycle of three to five years for the full implementation of the PHIS; along with the integration of existing FSIS systems.

Contracting with Small Businesses: The Agency will further increase an already aggressive commitment to maximizing the promotion and publicizing of small business program initiatives/opportunities, and its award of eligible contracts to small/small-disadvantaged business concerns. The Agency's impressive small business goal achievement extends over multiple fiscal years, and efforts will continue toward achieving results that exceed goals established by USDA. FSIS will particularly focus on increasing use of Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned businesses (SDVO) through internal Agency-wide promotion of SDVO sources. Efforts will also continue in expanding its

list of available SDVO vendors to maximize opportunities in considering SDVO's as a source to meeting future Agency requirements for goods and/or services.

Civil Rights, Equal Employment Opportunity, Diversity, and Inclusion: The ability of FSIS to meet the complex needs of our Nation's food safety and public health obligations and the expectations of the American people rests squarely on the Agency's dedicated and hard-working employees. FSIS must position itself to attract, develop and retain a top-quality workforce that can deliver results and ensure the safety and security of the U.S. meat, poultry, and processed egg products supply.

Equal employment opportunity is key to accomplishing this goal. In order to develop a competitive, highly qualified workforce, FSIS must fully utilize all employees' talents, without regard to non-merit factors such as race, sex, national origin, disability, age, color, religion, and similarly protected categories. While the promise of workplace equality is a legal right afforded all of our Nation's workers, equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion is more than a matter of social justice. It is a national economic imperative. FSIS will continue to make full use of America's human capital by deploying workplace practices that promote opportunities for the best and brightest talent available. The Agency will continue to be committed to ensuring all FSIS employees and applicants for employment have equal access and opportunity to achieve their fullest potential, and that employees are valued, trusted, and respected.

FSIS will take proactive steps to ensure equal employment opportunity for all their employees and applicants for employment. The Agency will continue to build and advance an infrastructure to promote and sustain strategic, comprehensive diversity and inclusion initiatives that integrate EEO into the Agency's strategic mission and leverage the diversity of the FSIS workforce. The Agency will continue to regularly evaluate its employment practices to identify barriers to equality of opportunity for all individuals; and, where such barriers are identified, FSIS will take measures to eliminate those barriers to equal access and opportunity.

Policies and practices that impede equitable and open competition cost the Agency each year. The most obvious are out-of-pocket costs borne by the Agency and FSIS employees in connection with workplace disputes. Perhaps less obvious – but just as expensive – are costs associated with decreased morale and productivity and the ineffective and inefficient use of human capital resources. FSIS can and will act to avoid these costs. FSIS will continue its firm commitment to the principles of equal employment opportunity, diversity, and inclusiveness, and make those principles a fundamental part of FSIS culture. With these steps, FSIS will ensure that all persons are provided opportunities to participate in the full range of employment opportunities and achieve to their fullest potential. Through an aggressive and continuing effort to achieve and sustain the essential elements of model Title VII and Rehabilitation Act programs, FSIS will work to proactively prevent potential discrimination before it occurs and establish systems to monitor responsiveness and legal compliance. The Agency will promote equal opportunity and leverage diversity and inclusion to create excellence in FSIS employees and Agency mission performance.

Budget/Finance: FSIS will, with crucial funding, maintain and improve upon its long history of protecting public health. The Agency will continue to seek financial support for its dedicated staff of scientific and technical employees, in order to foster a workforce that serves as the foundation of public health and performs the work needed to lower rates of foodborne illness. FSIS' plans for a more robust risk-based system must rely heavily on data to allow proactive decisions affecting food safety and public health. Funding must help deliver the data via information technology tools needed by the workforce to quickly respond to indications of risk to human health and food defense and do so with utmost efficiency and effectiveness. The Agency will continue to request funding that supports its long term vision. The Agency will allocate funds on the basis of the Agency's needs in an efficient and effective manner to provide financial data for informed-decision making. Management decisions will be made by utilizing financial data provided by the Foundation Financial Management System (USDA's accounting system) as well as a modified software package labeled the Budget and Performance Management System (BPMS). FSIS intends on using BPMS to accurately forecast salary and benefit requirements and other costs while increasing the precision of cost data to

effectively utilize resources and provide better data for informed decision-making. Spending patterns and types of spending will be analyzed to find greater efficiencies. These activities will include the management of field resources to provide guidance to Agency staffs on expenditures for travel and relocation. The BPMS will eventually be maintained in the newly implemented accounting system redesigned to track costs by the Agency's performance measures. Expenditure of funds will be continuously monitored and effective management controls will guide the oversight of expenditures.

Human Resources

- **Recruitment:** FSIS will continue to strengthen Agency relationships with the veterinary and science colleges and universities on the Recruitment Schedule by participating in on-site campus career fairs, serving as guest lecturers in classroom settings, and ultimately hiring students and new graduates for Agency positions. FSIS will continue to utilize and expand recruitment incentives and hiring flexibilities for hard-to-fill positions by offering recruitment bonuses, first post of duty moves, and student loan repayments.
- **Reform:** The Agency's mission has expanded to include responsibility for food defense, biosecurity, and public health science. As a result, the Agency must take steps towards establishing a more results-oriented Human Resource (HR) system that helps FSIS protect public health by better managing, developing and rewarding employees serving the American public. Through the use of a Demonstration Project, the Agency will implement the Public Health Human Resources System (PHRRS) which will establish a contribution-based pay system to effectively address the challenges of getting the right people with the right skills in the right locations. This new system has pay flexibilities to set an employee's pay at appointment anywhere in the pay band based on qualifications and labor market factors. In addition, results-based performance ratings linked to pay increases and recognition for contributions will be key to reaching Agency goals.

Other initiatives to aid in attracting and retaining employees include:

- aggressive pursuit of additional staffing authority to fill mission-critical positions;
- a modernized automated application process which allows the Agency to hire more quickly;
- continued expansion of outreach activities targeting a number of richly diverse universities and professional organizations to ensure the recruitment of a high quality and diverse workforce; and
- a succession plan in which leadership training and development programs are robust and active.



STRATEGIC GOAL SIX

Enhance the effectiveness of Agency outreach and communications to achieve public health goals.

PUBLIC OUTCOMES

- The Nation has better informed consumers of meat, poultry, and processed egg products.
- Food safety educators, State partners, industry stakeholders, and foreign trading partners receive and act upon scientifically sound information and guidelines.
- The public, including previously under-served groups, has even greater access to food safety information and messages.
- The public and all FSIS employees are dedicated to the Agency mission and its corporate priorities and goals.
- Reduced public exposure to foodborne illness from products under FSIS inspection.
- Small and Very Small plants have one location to obtain information and assistance pertaining to improved food safety systems.

OBJECTIVES

- Widely disseminated outreach programs to industry and foreign countries to assist them in meeting regulatory requirements and food defense programs.
- Widely disseminated outreach and education programs to industry, consumers, and food handlers to encourage the maintenance of food safety and food defense during production and in-distribution security.
- Identified key research needs to work with public/private entities to shape a research agenda.
- Enhanced internal and external communications in regards to public health priorities and food defense initiatives.
- Increased effectiveness and application of public messages.
- Continued collection and action on information in the public web site's customer satisfaction survey, and continue to lead the Department in satisfaction scores.
- Instituted leading edge, web-based tools (such as AskKaren, askFSIS, and the email subscription service) to provide immediate, accurate, 24/7 access to reliable and approved Agency information to better protect public health.
- Delivered targeted information for the Agency's customers, particularly businesses and partners as well as consumers and educators.

MEANS AND STRATEGIES

Outreach and Communication with Stakeholders: FSIS promotes stakeholder understanding and support of the Agency's public health mission through a variety of outreach efforts. Outreach to Agency stakeholders takes place in the numerous public meetings and scientific symposia that FSIS conducts each year. Through these public forums, FSIS maintains a dialogue with industry, academia, scientific, and consumer communities on various Agency priorities. FSIS conducts separate monthly meetings with industry associations and consumer representatives and, as a need arises, will work one-on-one with any stakeholder to provide information or answer questions in a timely manner.

In addition, activities are in place to meet the specific and diverse needs of Small and Very Small establishments, American Indians, Native Alaskans, Hispanics, and others. FSIS uses its Agency Web site, which includes a compilation of regulations and other Agency topics, to share information with stakeholders. A dedicated page on the Web site specifically addresses the needs of Small and Very Small establishment owners. The Agency employs other methods of reaching its stakeholders, including workshops, meetings, training sessions, press releases, constituent updates, and publications including many translated into Spanish.

FSIS also works closely with the National Advisory Committee on Meat and Poultry Inspection (NACMPI) and the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria in Foods (NACMCF) to address major Agency initiatives such as HACCP, outreach to Small and Very Small plants, Risk-Based Inspection, and other public health issues.

FSIS works closely with USDA in reaching out to Agency stakeholders in addition to maintaining a working relationship with many industry associations and States and local governments. FSIS also provides employees with up-to-date information through Agency publications and employee town hall meetings.

Through its public Web site, www.fsis.usda.gov, FSIS reaches a large, diverse, worldwide audience. Visitors to the Web site include consumers, educators, scientists and researchers, businesses, government partners, and owners/operators of small meat and poultry plants. Visitors to the public site may browse by audience as well as by subject. FSIS offers an email subscription service to notify subscribers when key pages they select have been updated; this allows members of each stakeholder group to quickly find content of greatest interest to them. The site offers two interactive question-and-answer tools, one geared toward consumers with food handling questions (Ask Karen) and the other is designed to answer technical and policy questions from a business audience. The Agency also offers a secure intranet, InsideFSIS, where FSIS employees can access career, training, work and home life balance, travel and commuting, and organizational information resources.

For FSIS' more robust risk-based inspection system to be successful, all plants must have well-designed, food-safety and defense systems, and the FSIS workforce must be well-trained to perform their public health duties. FSIS has a vital role in educating, as well as regulating, industry to improve public health and safety. FSIS provides outreach to Small and Very Small plants for more rapid and consistent delivery of key Agency services on emerging issues. The outreach services provide uniform responses to Small and Very Small plant questions, and supplies information to support risk based systems. FSIS collaborates with the Foreign Agricultural Service to provide technical assistance and education for foreign government officials to assist them in meeting U.S. inspection requirements. These efforts will promote an understanding of the scientific, technical, and regulatory information needed domestically and internationally by meat, poultry, and egg product plants to develop risk-based food safety and food defense systems fully capable of addressing existing and emerging threats to public health.

Outreach and Communication with Consumers: The Agency's goal is to protect public health through food safety. While the Agency makes every effort to ensure a safe product leaves meat and poultry plants, the Agency recognizes that the handling and cooking of meat play a role, too. As a result, the Agency continues to seek to educate consumers on food safety issues through a variety of means, both traditional and non-traditional, to affect positive behavior changes in order to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

FSIS continues to expand education campaigns and distribute new publications. A highly successful Food Safety Education Conference, held in 2006 in Denver, Colorado, has laid a solid foundation that the Agency continues to build upon by working through partnerships to expand outreach to at-risk audiences.

FSIS also continues its outreach to the under-served population which includes: African Americans, Asian Americans, Native American Indians and Alaskan Natives, and the visually-impaired through events and Food Safety Message Cards: "What You Need to Know About Foodborne Illness". These cards are prepared, distributed and posted on the FSIS Web site for African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Asian Americans, Hispanics, and in various languages.

These programs continue to foster safe handling of meat, poultry, and processed egg products among the general public, those who face increased risks from foodborne illness: the very young, older adults, pregnant women, people with chronic diseases, and people with compromised immune systems, as well as underserved populations.

WWW.FSIS.USDA.GOV



3. EVALUATION AND CONTROLS FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

FSIS employs substantial, ongoing management assurances and controls to ensure the Agency is successful in fulfilling its public health mission. The Agency conducts well-designed, objective, and timely analyses, audits, and evaluations of Agency programs and activities to ensure the Agency is meeting its strategic goals and objectives; effectively and efficiently applying human capital and budgetary resources; and, preventing waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement. These actions assure the presence, integrity, and effectiveness of Agency management controls and systems to meet FSIS' public health objectives.

FSIS MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

FSIS continually seeks ways to better achieve its mission and program results and to improve accountability. A key factor in achieving such outcomes and minimizing operational problems is the implementation of appropriate and effective management controls. As programs change and the Agency strives to improve operational processes and implement new technological developments, management continually assesses and evaluates management controls to assure that they are effective and updated when necessary.

The Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982 (FMFIA) requires the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to issue standards for management controls in the government. FSIS administers these standards and other regulations to provide the overall framework for establishing and maintaining management controls and for identifying and addressing major performance and management challenges and areas at greatest risk of fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. Management controls are designed to provide ongoing feedback regarding the achievement of an organization's objectives. FSIS has sought to achieve management assurances by complying with the five standard interrelated components of an effective management control program, which are control environment, risk assessment, control activities, information and communication, and monitoring.

- The control environment is the control consciousness (e.g., values, ethics, accountability, etc.) of an organization -- the atmosphere in which people conduct their activities and carry out their control responsibilities. The control environment is greatly influenced by the extent to which individuals recognize that they will be held accountable.
- Risk assessment is the identification and analysis of risks associated with the achievement of operations, financial reporting, and compliance goals and objectives. This, in turn, forms a basis for determining how those risks should be managed.
- Control activities are actions, supported by policies and procedures that, when carried out properly and in a timely manner, manage or reduce risks. Examples include preventative measures such as written policies and procedures, limits to authority, or supporting documentation, and detective measures such as verifying charges in the general ledger to file copies of approved invoices.
- Information and communication are essential to effecting control. Information about an organization's plans, control environment, risks, control activities, and performance must be communicated up, down, and across an organization. Reliable and relevant information from both internal and external sources must be identified, captured, processed, and communicated to the people who need it, in a form and timeframe that is useful.

- Monitoring is the assessment of management control performance over time. It is accomplished by ongoing monitoring activities and by separate evaluations of internal control such as self-assessments, peer reviews, and internal audits. The purpose of monitoring is to determine whether internal control is adequately designed, properly executed, and effective.

Toward that end, FSIS has embedded management controls into its overall management process so that it may best achieve its strategic goals and objectives, and can assure the Agency maintains its course toward achievement of its food safety mission. FSIS has established a more fully documented management control program that ensures meeting our strategic goals and objectives. With fully documented management controls, legal authority, individual responsibility, and programmatic accountability are more clearly defined and delegated. In addition, program performance is routinely analyzed, policies and procedures are regularly updated, management decisions are transparent and traceable, documentation is accurately maintained, and supervision is appropriate and continuous.

To facilitate successful implementation across the Agency, each program area within FSIS has a liaison for management controls. The management control liaisons assist in the development of management control policy and procedures; assist program managers in identifying and implementing management control processes and performance measures; assist in scheduling and planning management control audits; communicate management control-related guidance and directions to the programs; coordinate, compile and submit program reporting requirements; and, assist with educating and instructing employees on management control principles. This preventative approach assures an effective and efficient organization.

Agency leadership is ultimately responsible for improving the accountability and effectiveness of programs and operations by establishing, assessing, correcting, and reporting on management control. They accomplish this by taking systematic and proactive measures to:

- develop and implement appropriate, cost-effective management controls for results-oriented management;
- assess the adequacy of management control in programs and operations;
- separately assess and document management controls;
- identify needed improvements;
- take corresponding corrective action; and
- report annually on management controls through management assurance statements.

AssuranceNet: AssuranceNet is a web-based application that transforms near real-time performance data into valuable decision-making information for managers. It currently extrapolates information from FSIS inspection and import databases plus employee responses to key questions in these areas, as well as administrative duties, to perform complex calculations that graphically display inspection performance indicators in a standard and traceable manner.

INVESTIGATIONS

FSIS has established investigative functions for operational and personnel performance issues to assure that the Agency's activities achieve the highest operational, ethical and managerial standards. When operational or performance deviations occur, FSIS responds quickly to ascertain the root causes. FSIS often investigates whether its systems and process controls maintain program integrity and authority, and whether it administers its programs in the most effective, efficient and economical manner possible.

Program investigations sometimes look at how Agency management conducts its responsibilities. This is based on the concept that to properly administer a program, management must provide the

organization, policy guidance, planning, supervision and controls necessary to assure that its programs stay on track and progress.

Lastly, maintaining the public's trust is critical to FSIS improving food safety and food defense of meat, poultry, and processed egg products. FSIS conducts thorough and timely employee investigations in accordance with the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989, the Inspector General Act of 1978, and the Inspector General Act Amendments of 1988. These investigations ensure transparency in Agency operations and maintain the public's trust.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Improving FSIS programs and policies is critical in the effort to increase the safety and security of meat, poultry, and processed egg products. Improvements that make FSIS activities more effective and/or more efficient improve public health by reducing morbidity and mortality from the consumption of adulterated food products, and improve public welfare by reducing the mislabeling and misbranding of food products.

Evaluation is a formal, structured process of gathering and analyzing objective information needed to assess a program or policy. Evaluations provide practical information to assist decision makers who implement programs and policies, document program success or show how to improve efforts, and supply information to enhance the credibility of programs. Thus, evaluation indirectly improves public health and welfare.

FSIS has a dedicated evaluation staff whose work is an important component of the FSIS management assurance program. FSIS annually performs numerous evaluations, analytical reports, and other types of data analyses at the request of the FSIS Management Council or specific Agency offices. These evaluations focus on three areas:

- ensuring that programs are effective at improving public health by ensuring a safe and secure food supply;
- ensuring that Agency resources are used consistently with and efficiently towards accomplishing the Agency's public health mission; and
- improving accountability through the collection, maintenance, and use of timely information.

PROGRAM AUDIT

The concept of accountability for public resources is key in FSIS' processes. Stakeholders want to know whether Agency services are being provided efficiently, effectively, and in compliance with laws and regulations; and whether FSIS programs are achieving their objectives and desired outcomes, and at what cost. Therefore, the Agency conducts audits in order to provide stakeholders with confidence in the information that FSIS reports on regarding the results of programs or operations, as well as in the related systems of management controls. Audits ultimately lead to improving decisions, oversight, accountability, and management. Thus, auditing is a key element of FSIS management assurance and controls for fulfilling the Agency's Strategic Plans, and its duty to be accountable to the public.

FSIS conducts program audits to provide managers with information intended to enhance their programs. The audits include a methodical examination, review, and verification of a specific program element, activity, or event. The process involves a review of program background and supporting documentation, and a thorough check and analysis of the program's activities. Upon completing the audit, a written audit report is developed that addresses the findings and recommendations made for enhancing the program.

Program audits are an important feature of FSIS' management assurance program. FSIS formulates audit plans and conducts audits of existing programs, program components, and program activities. These audits focus on ensuring that: programs are effective; the food supply is safe and secure; resources are being used in the most efficient manner to accomplish the Agency's mission and objectives; and, reliable and timely information is obtained, reported, and used for Agency decision making. These audits provide the Agency with continued opportunity to ensure effective program operations. Examples of audit activities conducted in support of the Strategic Plan include: administrative audits; management control audits; compliance, investigation, and enforcement audits; and recovery audits.

Administrative audits are reviews against standards to determine whether Agency management discharges or conducts its responsibilities in accordance with established requirements. These audits are designed to ensure consistency, effectiveness, and efficiency in programs and activities. If FSIS administrative audits identify potential areas of inconsistency or other results, the Agency takes corrective action to ensure program efficiency and effectiveness. Follow-up audits are then conducted to ensure that programs have implemented and completed appropriate corrective action plans and corrective actions are completed in a timely manner.

Management control audits, which fulfill the monitoring function of the FSIS Management Control Program, are systematic audits of each individual program area's and/or division's management control system. The audits help to ensure authorities, responsibilities, and accountabilities are clearly defined and the program functions are effectively implemented. In general, management control audits have three objectives:

- to verify the development and implementation of the program's Management Control System;
- to test the effectiveness of the program's management controls in achieving program objectives; and
- to verify the establishment and attainment of each program's performance measures.

FSIS also conducts program audits of compliance, investigation, and enforcement activities. These audits are designed to ensure consistency and effectiveness in compliance, investigation, and enforcement activities; effective use of resources; consistency and effectiveness in the application of FSIS enforcement authorities and sanctions to punish violators; and adherence to Agency operating protocols.

Finally, FSIS conducts recovery audits. The PMA includes an initiative to reduce erroneous payments made by Federal government agencies that enter into contracts in excess of \$500 million per fiscal year. Departments, such as USDA, that meet this requirement must implement a recovery audit program for amounts potentially paid erroneously to contractors. USDA implements this requirement at the mission area/Agency level. Therefore FSIS, as a part of USDA, conducts audits for contracts that are deemed to have potential recovery cost savings benefits.

Civil Rights Compliance Assistance, Review and Evaluation (CARE) Program:

In accordance with 29 Code of Federal Regulation Part 1614 and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Management Directive 715 (MD-715), the Agency performs routine audits to evaluate the Agency's compliance with the requirements of Federal equal employment opportunity (EEO) laws, regulations, and program guidance. The Compliance Assistance, Review and Evaluation (CARE) Program is one of two primary tools used to assess the Agency's performance with respect to its obligations under Title VI, Title VII, and Rehabilitation Act programs and to evaluate FSIS' responsiveness and legal compliance. The other primary means of measuring the Agency's performance is the annual self-assessment required by EEOC MD-715 and reported to EEOC through the Department as part of the Agency's Annual Equal Employment Opportunity Program Status Report (EEOC Form 715-01). The Agency continues to focus on making both these assessment and evaluation processes increasingly more effective and efficient in the timely and responsive delivery of performance management data and analyses to FSIS key human capital decision makers. Through

continual process improvements in these compliance management processes the Agency's capacity to take proactive, preventive measures that reduce or mitigate the opportunities for unlawful employment discrimination continues to grow and improve.

DOMESTIC, STATE, AND FOREIGN AUDITS

The Agency has standard policy and procedures for auditing domestic, State, and Foreign programs. In addition to these standard audits, FSIS, on occasion, conducts systematic and special audits to assess targeted program operations.

FSIS conducts audits of domestic inspection programs to ensure the application of inspection procedures and protocols in federally inspected meat, poultry, and processed egg products establishments in the United States. These audits are conducted to closely examine the food safety systems established and maintained by establishments, and to determine if inspection requirements are being uniformly applied by FSIS employees nationwide.

FSIS also conducts comprehensive fiscal reviews of State inspection programs, and conducts periodic onsite fiscal reviews of each State's cooperative Meat, Poultry and Inspection (MPI) program on a triennial basis. The purpose of the fiscal review is for the Agency to determine the "at least equal to" status of the existing State Agencies (SA) inspection programs. Under Federal regulations, States operating meat and/or poultry inspection programs are required to operate these programs in a manner that is "at least equal to" the Federal program. FSIS has developed a comprehensive protocol to conduct comprehensive onsite fiscal reviews of the overall operations conducted by these state programs in order to verify that their programs and laws are at least equal to those applied by FSIS. In addition, the onsite review assures that costs claimed by the SA are allowable and properly accounted and that appropriate internal control mechanisms comply with guidelines.

FSIS also conducts audits of the meat, poultry, and processed egg products inspection systems of foreign countries that have been evaluated as having an inspection system in place that is "equivalent" to the U.S. system. These comprehensive audits cover all aspects of the inspection system, including staffing, funding of inspectors, government oversight, and laboratory procedures. These audits, in conjunction port-of-entry inspections, provide information that FSIS uses to assess the country's ability to maintain an equivalent inspection system that assures that products destined for consumption by the U.S. public are safe. As part of the foreign inspection system audits, FSIS auditors convey information regarding food defense and transportation security. During each audit, FSIS incorporates a "focus" area and requires the country to show what measures have been implemented to address both food defense at the inspected establishments and transportation security of the products between the inspected establishments and the ports from which the products are shipped to the United States.

EXTERNAL OVERSIGHT

Agency management assurances and controls also include external audits and evaluations of Agency programs by independent bodies. The General Accounting Office (GAO) and the USDA Office of the Inspector General (OIG) both provide external, independent oversight to ensure that effective management controls are in place in all program, financial, and administrative activities. Through evaluations and audits of Federal programs and expenditures, they advise executive agencies about ways to make government more effective and responsive in order to improve performance, reduce program vulnerabilities, enhance program integrity, increase efficiency and effectiveness, and ensure the accountability of the Federal government. In addition, these activities ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken to resolve program weaknesses or deficient areas.

While evaluations and audits are being conducted, FSIS works closely with GAO and OIG program officials to coordinate oversight activities and provide logistical support. Upon completion of these

activities, FSIS uses these reports and associated findings and recommendations generated by GAO and OIG to identify both program strengths and potential areas for improvement. FSIS also uses these audit reports and recommendations to analyze risks, if any, associated with the achievement of FSIS operations, in order to determine whether management control enhancements would be effective in managing these risks.

Upon completion of a GAO and OIG evaluation and/or audit, FSIS is presented with a comprehensive report which details the GAO and OIG general understanding of the program being reviewed, findings of weaknesses or deficient areas within that program, and recommendations for corrective actions and/or management controls. FSIS provides a response detailing any inaccuracies or disputed findings and information on improvements/management controls that have either already been initiated or management is committing to initiate.

In responding to findings of weaknesses or deficient areas detailed in these reports, FSIS analyzes the findings, and determines appropriate control actions that can be implemented to mitigate risks. FSIS also prepares periodic status reports, monitors activities, and analyzes the program's intended and corrective actions in relation to previously agreed-upon management commitments to assess management control performance over time and determine whether management controls are adequately designed properly executed, and effective.

DATA ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

FSIS has strengthened both its data collection and analysis activities to ensure valid, timely data is collected, carefully analyzed, and continually reported in a user-friendly manner. FSIS also employs assessment and analysis of public health data to ensure that the Agency is meeting its strategic goals and objectives. An effective gauge of how FSIS policies are working is looking at how public health is impacted. Analysis of data obtained from FSIS' regulatory verification activities, compliance and enforcement activities, sampling, as well as other sources of data, over time, provide the Agency with evidence that shows whether or not our approach is working. FSIS therefore employs data analysis as a management verification measure in determining the success of our strategies to combat threats to food safety and defense and to help ensure that program components are effective in meeting our public health goals and objectives.

In addition to updating and upgrading its data processing systems, two new groups have been formed in the Agency to ensure that it is analyzing its data in a coordinated and efficient manner. The two groups are the Data Analysis and Integration Group (DAIG) and the Data Coordination Committee (DCC). The DAIG consists of a staff dedicated to working with all program areas on data analysis issues to ensure data analyses are consistent and of high-quality; ensure data analyses are relevant to program offices' business processes and the Agency mission; provide assistance in data analysis; and provide a new level of sophistication for data analysis. The DCC is comprised of senior level staff from each of FSIS' program areas who coordinate data-related activities within the Agency and who act as liaisons between the DAIG and their program areas.

The DAIG has developed information sheets to describe the data streams within the Agency. The sheets provide detailed information on the data streams, including how the information is collected, its limitations, the reports generated from the data, and the audience for dissemination of those reports. The DAIG has also developed a summary table – the FSIS Data Analysis and Reports Project Matrix – of all data analysis and reports that are being conducted by the Agency. This documentation of the Agency's data and the analysis and reports being conducted or developed by the Agency provide a clearer picture of what data are available and what is currently being done with the data to avoid redundancies.

Using data analysis as a verification tool, the Agency is able to analyze trends and conclude whether improvements in regulatory oversight and training have been effective. This data analysis also will serve as a verification of whether our Agency's strong, science-based policies aimed at reducing pathogens in America's meat, poultry, and processed egg products are effective in helping the Agency

meet its public health goals. As a beginning to this effort, the Agency has developed and launched Phase 1 of its Enterprise Reporting System to replace each inspection, import/export and selected lab systems' separate readers to provide a more holistic view of the Agency's data for analysis.

FSIS uses regulatory verification, compliance, enforcement, sampling, and other data and information to discern trends, causes, and outcomes to validate that the Agency's inspection, verification, enforcement, compliance, and stakeholder outreach are effective in protecting the public health. Data to be considered can include: analysis of product recalls, detentions and seizures; analysis of compliance data such as the PBIS database of in-plant inspection activities and compliance rates; CDC FoodNet data; FSIS' regulatory sampling data for foodborne pathogens such as *E. coli* O157:H7 and *Salmonella*; and enforcement actions such as suspensions, in-plant Notices of Intended Enforcement (NOIEs), prosecutions, and administrative enforcement actions. Analysis of this data aids FSIS in gauging how effective we have been in meeting our strategic goals of establishing public health systems and policies that ensure products are safe and secure, and in protecting the health and welfare of consumers.

SUMMARY

Through application of this system of management controls, FSIS ensures the Agency is effective and efficient in fulfilling its public health mission. The wide variety of sound, objective, and critical analyses, audits, and evaluations of FSIS programs, conducted by Agency officials and outside authorities such as GAO and OIG ensure FSIS is: meeting its strategic goals and objectives; effectively and efficiently applying human capital and budgetary resources; and, preventing waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement. These on-going activities assure the effectiveness of Agency management controls and systems to ensure the public health through food safety and defense.



Addendum

A. Cross-Cutting and Other Activities

B. Cross-Comparison of FSIS Measures

C. FSIS FY 2009 Performance-Based
Budget Measures

D. Summary, FSIS Strategic Plan
(2000-2005)

CROSS-CUTTING AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

FSIS is involved in a variety of forward thinking intergovernmental activities involving Federal, State and local beneficiaries. A sampling of these activities are:

- Food Safety Risk Assessment Committee;
- Food Emergency Response Network (FERN);
- Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) Partnerships; and
- Codex Alimentarius Commission.

The vision for future intergovernmental activities is to include a variety of outreach programs that coordinate with other agencies on common goals to be prepared for any food safety and food defense issues.

Risk Assessment Committee

USDA established a Food Safety Risk Assessment Committee in July 2003 to enhance coordination and communication among various USDA agencies in planning and conducting activities related to risk assessments. The committee has representatives from FSIS, Agricultural Marketing Service, Agricultural Research Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, Economic Research Service, Food and Nutrition Service, and the Office of Risk Assessment and Cost Benefit Analysis. (This is an office in the Department's Office of the Chief Economist. See Web site: <http://www.riskworld.com/websites/webfiles/ws5aa011.htm>)

The risk assessment committee combines the expertise of USDA agencies to build a solid scientific basis on which to base regulatory and policy decisions. The committee:

- Prioritizes risk assessments, identify research needs and identify needs for modeling techniques, methods or data;
- Provides guidance related to carrying out risk assessments, including addressing issues such as data quality and peer review; and
- Identifies outside experts and/or universities to assist in the development of risk assessments.

Food Emergency Response Network

FERN consists of Federal, State, and local governmental laboratories responsible for protecting citizens and the American food supply from intentional biological, chemical, and radiological terrorism. The goal of the FERN is to (1) have a robust food testing laboratory network with the surge capacity capable of collecting data in order to respond to an event involving the intentional or accidental contamination of the food supply or even a hoax, (2) maintain U.S. agricultural and industrial economic stability by rapid identification if an event occurs, and (3) ensure/restore consumer confidence in the safety of the Nation's food supply by the rapid response of the Network.

While FSIS' initial goal was to have 100 FERN laboratories participate in FSIS Microbiology Cooperative Agreement Program, the Agency developed plans in FY 2006 towards restructuring FERN. In this new approach, FSIS will limit labs participating in the Microbiology Cooperative Agreement Program to a total of 25 FERN labs that will provide full U.S. geographic representation for microbiological testing. Currently, 21 labs have been designated FERN labs, for USDA purposes.

The 25 FERN labs will provide National coverage, by region, with the expertise needed to meet the overall mission of FERN. All 25 labs will be capable of providing screening microbial tests and results for the ten priority threat agents in all food matrices. Approximately 15 of these 25 labs nationwide will be funded as Regional Reference Labs. In addition to the screening capacity, these Regional Reference Labs will also serve as technical transfer labs, sharing knowledge and expertise. If necessary, these labs will conduct specific projects, as needed. All 25 FERN labs will be funded to participate in screening projects, method validation studies, and field trials of new methods for other threat agents. Once fully funded, the public health infrastructure will be far better prepared to respond to a contaminated food supply, and will benefit the physical and financial health of the Nation.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is a federal partner in FERN. FDA staffs a National Program Office that administers the following support programs for FERN: (1) houses and technically supports eLEXNET (FERN laboratory data capture program); (2) funds and administers a Cooperative Agreement Program to eight FERN Chemistry and five Radiological laboratories; (3) administers the FERN Proficiency Testing Program through the Center for Food Safety & Nutrition (CFSAN); (4) provides training support to the FERN Microbiological, Chemistry and Radiology training sessions through the Office of Regulatory Affairs' University (ORA U); and (5) staffs the five Regional Coordination Centers with staff officers to provide outreach and coordination to all of the FERN federal, state and local partner laboratories within the five FERN regions.

Association of Food and Drug Officials

Association of Food and Drug Officials (AFDO) is the association through which state and local food safety officials work together to address common problems. In cooperation with USDA, AFDO developed a HACCP-based course of instruction on meat and poultry processing at retail. Another partnership with AFDO resulted in guidelines for effective state regulation of slaughter facilities exempt from mandatory inspection under Federal law. A third partnership is for coordinating state and local governments in a national effort to link government food laboratories at all levels of government into a national network. FSIS has worked with AFDO to coordinate annual meetings of Federal, state, and local food laboratory directors and promoted uniformity and reliability among state and local labs in food analyses and information sharing. The June 2003, meeting of the nation's state laboratory directors for the first time included environmental labs, veterinary diagnostic labs, and clinical labs as well as food labs, in recognition of the fact that many laboratory communities may need to work together under many food safety and food defense scenarios.

FSIS Virtual Representative —“Ask Karen”

“Ask Karen,” the Agency's virtual representative (vRep) has been asked many thousands of questions from customers world-wide. This Web-based, automated response system is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. “Ask Karen” responds to inquiries from the public about the safe handling, preparation and storage of meat, poultry, and processed egg products from an extensive database of food safety information. This innovative communication tool is another means of supporting the Agency's public health focus and educating consumers, one-on-one, about safe food handling behaviors in order to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline

FSIS handles tens of thousands of telephone hotline calls. Calls include requests from newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and book authors for live interviews with radio and television stations. The Hotline also serves Spanish-speaking callers. Additionally, with increased promotion of the use of the Hotline e-mail address, consumers are now assisted through e-mail.

Codex Alimentarius Commission

The U.S. Codex Office coordinates all U.S. government and non-government participation in the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which sets safety standards for all foods in international trade. U.S. Codex hosts numerous international committee meetings, represents the U.S. at major international meetings, and participates in results oriented training to facilitate international safe handling processes. The U.S. Codex office provides leadership for world-wide outreach to meet a broad range of stakeholder goals, sharing common approaches and building strategic partnerships for the long-term success of U.S. policy. The U.S. Codex office hosts the U.S. Codex Policy Steering Committee, chaired by the Under Secretary of Food Safety, which provides overall strategic and tactical guidance for these efforts.



CROSS-COMPARISON OF FSIS CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MEASURES**USDA Strategic Goal 4:**

Enhance Protection and Safety of the Nation's Agriculture and Food Supply.

USDA Objective 4.1:

Reduce the Incidence of Foodborne Illnesses Related to Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products in the United States.

USDA-OCFO Departmental Strategic Plan (2005-2010) Performance Measures	USDA-OBPA FY 2008 Annual Performance Plan/Report Measures	FSIS Performance-Budget Measures from FY 2009 Explanatory Notes
4.1.1 Reduce overall public exposure to generic <i>Salmonella</i> from broiler carcasses using existing scientific standards.	4.1.1 Reduce overall public exposure to generic <i>Salmonella</i> from broiler carcasses using existing scientific standards.	Reduce overall public exposure to generic <i>Salmonella</i> from broiler carcasses using existing scientific standards.
4.1.2 Decrease the overall-percent-positive rate for <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in ready-to-eat products through the use of Food Safety Assessments.	4.1.2 Decrease the overall-percent-positive rate for <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in ready-to-eat products through the use of Food Safety Assessments.	Decrease the overall-percent-positive rate for <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in ready-to-eat products through the use of Food Safety Assessments.
4.1.3 Reduce the overall public exposure of <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 in ground beef.	4.1.3 Reduce the overall public exposure of <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 in ground beef.	Reduce the overall public exposure of <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 in ground beef.

FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE

2009 Explanatory Notes

SUMMARY OF BUDGET PERFORMANCE

Key Performance Outcomes and Measures

Agency Mission: Protect consumers by ensuring that meat, poultry, and egg products are safe, secure, wholesome and correctly labeled and packaged.

Key Outcomes: Reduction in foodborne illness associated with the consumption of meat, poultry, and egg products. FSIS' key outcome restates USDA's Strategic Objective 4.1: *Reduce the incidence of foodborne illnesses related to meat, poultry, and egg products in the U.S.*

Enhance International Competitiveness of American Agriculture through coordination of all U.S. government and non-government participation in the sanitary and phytosanitary standards-setting activities of the Codex Alimentarius Commission. This key outcome relates to USDA's Strategic Objective 1.3: *Improve sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) system to facilitate agricultural trade.*

Key Performance Measures: The continued mission of FSIS is to protect consumers by ensuring that the commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products are safe, secure, wholesome and correctly labeled and packaged.

FSIS agency goals embody USDA's Strategic Goal 4: *Enhance Protection and Safety of the Nation's Agriculture and Food Supply*, and specifically Objective 4.1 – *Reduce the Incidence of Foodborne Illnesses Related to Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products in the U.S.*

FSIS programs also contribute to USDA Strategic Goal 1: *Enhance International Competitiveness of American Agriculture*. FSIS contributes to USDA Objective 1.3 *Improved Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) System to Facilitate Agricultural Trade*. In addition to FSIS' unique work with the Codex Alimentarius committees, FSIS houses the U.S. Codex Alimentarius office, whose principal purpose is the setting of international sanitary and phytosanitary standards.

FSIS' FY 2009 budget request is targeted at these core food safety strategies:

- Base program decisions and policy development on science;
- Apply the public health and technical skills of our workforce to foodborne hazards;
- Defend the food supply from intentional contamination;
- Manage the inspection program effectively and economically; and
- Continue effective public health outreach and education.

The FSIS FY 2009 budget request includes initiatives to build up the infrastructure of its public health information system, including efforts to enhance the electronic exchange of export-import data; to prepare for future risk-based inspection; to defend the security of the food supply; to manage its human capital wisely; and to promote consumer protection standards at home and in the world arena.

Key Performance Targets:

	2004 actual	2005 actual	2006 actual	2007 actual	2008 target	2009 target
Pathogen Reduction						
Reduce overall public exposure to generic <i>Salmonella</i> from broiler carcasses using existing scientific standards*	n/a	n/a	45%*	71%*	80%*	85%*
Decrease the overall percent positive rate for <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in ready-to-eat products through the use of Food Safety Assessments	0.89%	0.70%	0.60%	0.31%	0.29%	0.28%
Reduce the prevalence of <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 on ground beef	0.19%	0.17%	0.16%	0.23%	0.24%	0.20%
Pathogen Reduction Costs (\$000)	785,557	815,064	837,756	892,136	930,120	951,946

* Prior to June 2006, FSIS reported the percent-positive findings of *Salmonella* on raw product tested, similar to the measurement of *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*) and *E. coli* O157:H7. However, as of June 2006, FSIS no longer compares the percent positives from one year to the next due to a change in how the establishments are selected for testing. FSIS is now employing a “category” system to measure establishments’ performance. FSIS compares how many establishments are in “Category 1” from one quarter to the next and from one year to the next. Category 1 represents establishments that have achieved 50 percent or less of the performance standard or baseline guidance, for two consecutive FSIS test sets. Category 2 represents establishments that have achieved greater than 50 percent on at least one of the two most recent FSIS test sets without exceeding the performance standard or baseline guidance. Category 3 represents establishments that have exceeded the performance standard or baseline guidance on either or both of the two more recent FSIS test sets. For example, for broiler slaughter establishments, the performance standard is constructed such that the standard is met if there are 13 or fewer positive samples in 51 daily tests. Consequently, a Category 1 establishment would have six or fewer positive results in the two most recent 51 sample sets.

As more establishments reach Category 1 status, fewer people will be exposed to *Salmonella* from raw classes of product regulated by FSIS. Consequently, as more establishments gain greater control of this pathogen, the likelihood of achieving the Healthy People 2010 goal of halving the number of people per 100,000 becoming infected with *Salmonella* from all food sources, including meat and poultry products, is more likely to result. FSIS set a goal of having 90 percent of establishments achieve Category 1 status by 2010. By then, FSIS will have completed one or more new baseline studies. The results of these new baselines would be to establish new performance standards or baseline guidance and to re-set Category 1, Category 2, and Category 3 criteria.

SUMMARY, FSIS STRATEGIC PLAN (2000 – 2005)

This is a summary of the Agency's previous official plan. This document can be found on the FSIS Homepage.

Mission

FSIS ensures that the Nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products is safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled and packaged, as required by the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act.

Strategic Goal

Protect the public health by significantly reducing the prevalence of foodborne hazards from meat, poultry, and egg products.

The goal reflects the Agency's public health responsibilities embodied in its Mission Statement and required by its legislative mandates.

The **outcome** of this goal is a further reduction of 25 percent in the number of foodborne illnesses associated with meat, poultry, and egg products by the year 2005, using a baseline year of 1997. The CDC baseline numbers for foodborne illnesses and deaths attributable to all foods are estimated to be 76 million and 5,000 respectively.

Objectives

1. Provide worldwide leadership towards the creation and utilization of risk assessment capacity for meat, poultry, and egg products that is supported by the latest research and technology.
2. Create a coordinated national and international food safety risk management system for meat, poultry, and egg products from farm-to-table.
3. Conduct a comprehensive national and international risk communication program that is an open exchange of information and opinion about risk among risk assessors, risk managers, and the public to reduce risk.
4. Create and maintain an FSIS infrastructure to support Risk Assessment, Risk Management, and Risk Communication objectives.

FSIS

FY 2008-2013