



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food Safety and  
Inspection Service

Volume 8, Issue 7  
February 16, 2007



# FSIS Constituent Update

Protecting Public Health Through Food Safety and Food Defense

## Office of Food Safety to Hold Codex Public Meetings

FSIS published two *Federal Register* notices on February 13 to announce upcoming Codex meetings.

USDA's Office of Food Safety will hold a public meeting on March 7. The purpose of this meeting is to provide information and receive public comments on agenda items and draft U.S. positions that will be discussed at the 24th Session of the Codex Committee on General Principles of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which will be held from April 2 - 6, in Paris, France.

The public meeting will be held from 1 to 4 p.m., in Room 107-A, Jamie L. Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, D.C. 20250.

For more information about the March 7 public meeting, contact Jasmine Matthews, program analyst, FSIS, at (202) 205-7760.

of Health and Human Services' Food and Drug Administration, will hold a public meeting to provide information and receive public comments on agenda items and draft U.S. positions that will be discussed at the First Session of the Codex Committee on Contaminants in Foods of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, which will be held from April 16 - 20, in Beijing, China.

The public meeting will be held from 1 to 3 p.m., in Room 1A003, Harvey W. Wiley Federal Building, 5100 Paint Branch Highway, College Park, Md. 20740.

For further information about the March 8 public meeting, contact Ellen Matten, international issues analyst, FSIS, at (202) 205-7760.

The related *Federal Register* notices can be viewed on FSIS' Web site at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&Policies/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&Policies/index.asp).

On March 8, USDA's Office of Food Safety and the Department

### *Inside this Issue*

Timeline of Events Related to <i>Lm</i> and <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 .....	2
Notices .....	2
Upcoming Regulatory Education Sessions .....	3

## Export Requirement Updates



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

### Mexico

Complete information can be found at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/Export\\_Information/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/Export_Information/index.asp).

## FSIS Posts Timeline of Events Related to *Listeria monocytogenes* and *E. coli* O157:H7

FSIS has posted on its Web site a timeline of events related to *Listeria monocytogenes* (*Lm*) and *E. coli* O157:H7.

The timelines describe major events that are developing and implementing policies which aim at the control and reduction of *Lm* in ready-to-eat products and *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw beef products.

The *Lm* chronology begins with FSIS' initiation of microbiological

testing for *Lm* in ready-to-eat processed products in 1987.

The chronology for *E. coli* O157:H7 begins with the 1993 outbreak of illness in the Northwest United States.

To view the timeline of events related to *Lm* and *E. coli* O157:H7, visit FSIS' Web site at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Updates\\_&\\_Memos/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Science/Updates_&_Memos/index.asp).

## FSIS Issues Notices

FSIS issued Notice 10-07 on February 9 titled, *Instructions for Verifying the Proper Removal of Visible Beef Tonsillar Material from Tongues by Use of Skinning Machines*.

This notice instructs inspection program personnel how to verify that establishments that choose to use skinning machines for beef tongues are properly removing tonsillar material.

Complete removal of the visible tonsillar material is necessary because this material is a specified risk material in cattle of any age.

This notice only addresses the removal of tonsillar material by means of skinning machines. Inspection program personnel

should continue to follow the current instructions for the removal, segregation and disposition of tonsillar material by all other means.

The agency also issued Notice 11-07 on February 15 to advise inspection program personnel that FSIS is extending the time that the natural casings industry has to bring itself into compliance with the agency's expectations in its voluntary fee for service program under 9 *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 350 for the inspection of casings and the certification of casings for export.

On November 17, 2006, FSIS announced in Notice 76-06, *Interim Period for Voluntary Inspection and Certification*

*Continued on page three*

## How to Keep Food Safe During an Emergency

**Question: Some of my food in the freezer started to thaw or had thawed when the power came back on. Is the food safe? How long will the food in the refrigerator be safe with the power off?**

**Answer: Never taste food to determine its safety!** Evaluate each item separately. If an appliance thermometer was kept in the freezer, read the temperature when the power comes back on.

If the appliance thermometer stored in the freezer reads 40° F or below, the food is safe and may be refrozen.

If a thermometer has not been kept in the freezer, check each package of food to determine the safety.

Remember you can not rely on appearance or odor. If the food still contains ice crystals or is 40° F or below, it is safe to refreeze.

Refrigerated food should be safe as long as the power is out no more than four hours. Keep the door closed as much as possible. Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs and leftovers) that have been above 40° F for two hours.

## Notices ...

*Continued from page two*

of *Natural Casings*, that certain measures to facilitate the industry's efforts would be in place until they expire on February 15, 2007. FSIS is extending that expiration date.

FSIS intends to issue a directive that will replace the series of notices, including this notice, regarding the voluntary inspection

and certification of natural casings that FSIS issued in 2006. When issued, the directive will include a specified implementation date.

Notices 10-07 and 11-07 can be viewed on FSIS' Web site at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations\\_&\\_Policies/FSIS\\_Notices\\_Index/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Regulations_&_Policies/FSIS_Notices_Index/index.asp).

## FSIS to Hold Regulatory Education Sessions in Wisconsin, South Carolina and Missouri

FSIS will hold regulatory education sessions on February 28 and March 6 for the owners and operators of small and very small plants in South Carolina and Missouri.

The regulatory education session on February 28 will cover regulatory walk-through of sanitation performance standard regulations and food defense.

The session will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Madison East Towne, 4402 East Washington Avenue, Madison, Wis.

The regulatory education sessions on March 6 will be held at the following locations:

- Tuesday, March 6, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Ramada Columbia Northeast, 7510 Two

Notch Road, Columbia, S.C.; and

- Tuesday, March 6, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., at the Radisson Hotel & Suites Kansas City-City Center, 1301 Wyandotte, Kansas City, Mo.

The March sessions will cover a regulatory walk-through of sanitation standard operating procedures and the hazard analysis and critical control point and rules of practice regulations.

To register by phone, call (800) 336-3747.

Online registration forms and information about upcoming sessions can be found at [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News\\_&\\_Events/Outreach\\_Sessions\\_SVS\\_Plants/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Outreach_Sessions_SVS_Plants/index.asp).